

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**PEACEBUILDING AMONG SHONA COMMUNITIES IN
TRANSITION IN ZIMBABWE: A PARTICIPATORY ACTION
RESEARCH**

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I, Norman Chivasa (student number 206523417) declare that

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my mother and father –Mrs. Vongai and Mr. Richard Zhira Chivasa, Tavengegweyi, Matanha, Chivi, Murambwi. May God continue to keep you alive and healthy?

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domino
AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
ASCA	Accumulated Savings and Credit Association
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CCSF	Church and Civil Society Forum
CPMRT	Conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECLF	Ecumenical Church Leaders' Forum
F4P	Football for Peace
GPA	Global Political Agreement
GNU	Government of National Unity
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
I4P	Infrastructure for Peace
ISLSs	Internal Savings Lending Schemes
JOMIC	Joint Monitoring and Implementing Committee
LPCs	Local Peace Committees
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
NAD	Native Affairs Department
ONHRI	Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration
PAG	Participatory Action Group
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PBIASL	Support to Peacebuilding and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods
ROSCA	Rotating Savings and credit Association
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SILC	Savings and Internal Lending
SPT	Solidarity Peace Trust
SDP IWG	Sport for Development and Peace International Work Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VCW	Village Community Worker
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
VPC	Village Peace Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WPC	Ward Peace Committee
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZESN	Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network
ZHRNF	Zimbabwe human right NGO Forum
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Liberation Army
ZIMCET	Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust
ZIM ASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police

ABSTRACT

This study is a participatory action research (PAR) intervention that examined the contributions of informal peace committees to peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The emergence of informal peace committees as a diverse segment of Shona customary courts is a demonstration of institutional transformation that has taken place among the Shona people. In many respects, the discourse on peace committees, as peacebuilding mechanisms has gathered momentum in recent years owing to the relative success stories recorded in countries such as Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Philippines, Sudan, Uganda. In these and other countries that have experienced violent conflict, communities have taken responsibility to set up informal peace committees in order to address peace challenges bedevilling them.

To interrogate systematically the contributions of informal peace committees to peacebuilding, this study established a 15-member ward peace committee (WPC) in Ward 8 of Seke district, Mashonaland East Province. Since the study was predominantly participatory, requiring the researcher to work with a small advisory team, a 15 member WPC became the participatory action group (PAG). A total of 42 participants and informants involving 21 males and 21 females were purposively sampled in the study, and due to its participatory nature, the PAG played multiple roles which included planning, convening meetings, implementing resolutions and the analysis of data. Data obtained from weekly and monthly WPC meetings were complemented with participant observation, six in-depth interviews, a WPC focus group, three village peace committee (VPC) focus groups and seven narratives on experiences of informal peace committees in Harare, Marondera, Mutare and Wedza districts.

From the findings, one of the major themes that stood out was that informal peace committees give members of the village the opportunity to come together and share ideas on problems bedevilling them. Another popular view but also related to the above, was that informal peace committees are a direct response by communities to take responsibility for their own peace as they open space for building relationships through collaborative resolution of conflicts as well as fostering the improvement of livelihoods through low cost entrepreneurial activities such as bee-keeping, market gardening, farming, vegetable drying and poultry. These activities have made marked differences in that low-income communities have coped with economic shocks thereby mitigating violent conflict. The study concluded that informal peace committees are an effective means of building peace because communities take responsibility for their own peace using local resources and skills. It recommends that while informal peace committees should remain independent and community-based, they can feed into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe, in particular, the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) which was created in May 2013.

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

“If you are doing good things for us without us you are doing those things against us” (Rev. M. Kuchera).

1.1 Introduction

The discourse on peacebuilding mechanisms through informal peace committees, or informal infrastructures for peace, has gathered momentum in recent years. Informal peace committees have rapidly made their mark as noted in the success stories recorded in a wide range of countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya; South Sudan and Uganda (van Tongeren, 2013, p.50). These and other examples of successful informal peace committees present an open space for peacebuilding mechanisms, that is, structures with peace objectives (Odendaal, 2012, p.42) or structures responsible for peace (Moyo, n.d., p.92). In all aspects at the community level, informal peace committees seem to deliver the hopes and expectations of mitigating violent conflict **and promoting socio-economic** development initiatives that can contribute to the reduction of poverty.

This mechanism appears not to have been fully embraced in mainstream peacebuilding initiatives in Zimbabwe, even though there is a rapidly increasing number of informal peace committees. For this reason, this study was designed using participatory action research to examine the possibility of informal peace committees to contribute to peacebuilding in Seke district, Mashonaland East Province, Zimbabwe. The purpose of the study was to set up a ward-level pilot peace committee in order to establish whether informal peace committees can be an effective response to peace challenges bedevilling rural communities in the Seke district. Although this study explores possibilities of transforming informal peace committees to become an alternative to top-down infrastructures for peace, it acknowledges the value of macro-infrastructures for peace and does not seek to replace them, rather, to bring informal peace committees into the mainstream of peacebuilding efforts using local community structures as a vehicle to create a greater impact in addressing peace challenges in Seke district. The underlying question is whether and under what conditions can informal peace committees be transformed into mainstream peacebuilding initiatives in a country like Zimbabwe? To interrogate these issues systematically, the study drew from disciplines such as peace studies, economics, development, business, social anthropology and sociology.

1.2 Terminological clarification

In this first chapter, I seek to clarify terms frequently used in the current study which are: infrastructures for peace; local peace committee; customary courts; peacebuilding, transition and community. These concepts are forerunners to the research problem that this study seeks to address and therefore require clarification.

1.2.1 Infrastructure for peace (I4P) defined

Lederach formulated the concept of I4P in the context of peace processes in Latin America and Africa in the 1980s. His primary concern was to propose supportive mechanisms to peace processes at local, regional and national levels. In essence, Lederach believed that an I4P was a “core ingredient of a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding” (2012, p.8). Further, he acknowledged that since the first articulation of the concept in one of his publications, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (1997), I4P has gained currency with several practitioners and has become a “guiding principle in the development of a peacebuilding framework” (Lederach, 2012, p.8).

Lederach’s notion of an I4P involves three aspects. The first aspect is that an I4P is a strategic responsive mechanism that is multi-sectored in terms of the involvement of actors such as elites and grassroots in the social change process. The involvement of both elites and grassroots ensures collaboration by all people affected by conflict. Lederach says “an I4P envisioned the newly emerging challenges as a form of both violence prevention and conflict management with similarities more proximate to pre and on-going negotiations” (2012, p.10). The important point here that Lederach is positing is that an I4P is a form of violence prevention. This means that the creation of an I4P is a supportive mechanism for the prevention of future violence.

The second aspect is the sustainability of I4P. Lederach says sustainability is linked to an understanding of the strengths at the disposal of the community experiencing a conflict. He uses the phrase “appreciative and elicit understanding's of context and culture” (Lederach 2012, p.10). In that sense, he suggests that sustainability occurs when an I4P departs from the deficiency, needs-based approach to an asset-based approach where the skills and resources at the disposal of the community experiencing a conflict are put into use to address conflict and to prevent its future recurrence. This means that an I4P should take into consideration the local peacebuilding capacity rather than to always rely on imported capacities at the exclusion of locally available resources for peace. Lederach says: “the notion of I4P proposes ...a high-view and reconsideration of context in order to understand, encourage and support resources from within

the setting” (2012, p.9). This assertion suggests that an I4P is not an event but a process requiring collaboration between various actors and a context-specific shared vision of a desired future.

The third and final aspect is the systemic approach to conflict, conflict transformation framework by another name. The thrust of the conflict transformation framework finds expression in a two-fold question, according to Lederach: “How do we end something destructive...? [And] how do we build toward that which is desired?” (Lederach 2012, p.11). In essence what this suggests is that, nothing, in Lederach’s view, can be achieved unless the interdependence and interconnectivity of various actors, processes and the context become a point of reference.

Lederach believes that peacebuilding takes place within a dynamic socio-political context that needs not to be taken for granted because of its complexities. For that reason, an I4P as a creative response should take into consideration the context, should envision a change process out of the encountered dynamic. Lederach concludes by saying that an I4P must have a long-term vision for a social change process and must be internally driven to create a platform for continuous testing of both theory and practice and to draw lessons (2012, p.13). Hence, he invented the now famous phrase “I4P.”

Van Tongeren (cited in Hopp-Nishanka (2012, p.2) takes the argument further and opines that the concept of I4P entered into the international lexicon between 2002 and 2006. In his view, this concept is an architectural metaphor which conveys not only the erection of a structure but strategic thinking, planning, implementation and the involvement of a number of stakeholders in order to achieve the desired results (van Tongeren, 2012, p.92). From this, he argues that an I4P involves “extensive networks that connect sections of a society in various ways and enables productive interaction.” An I4P therefore connects various stakeholders in order to create a desired future. van Tongeren then moves to establish the link between peacebuilding and I4P. He argues that the connected stakeholders take “peacebuilding as a joint responsibility of society as a whole and using all available resources, capacities, mechanisms and structures for sustainable peace” (2012, p.92). In summary, it can be argued that an I4P gives the community or society an opportunity at every stage of the conflict to create structures through collaboration that help to sustain co-existence, tolerance, or cordial harmony using locally available capacities. This study is more interested with informal local peace committees, one of the emerging strategic responses to peace challenges with a social change objective at grassroots level (Schaefer, 2010). The question that comes to mind is what does an I4P looks like?

1.2.2 The characteristics of infrastructure for peace (I4P)

As mentioned above, the characteristics of I4P are determined by cultural contexts and the nature of a conflict. Unger and colleagues (2013, pp.4-6) have identified five key features of I4P as highlighted below. In the first place, I4P are based on the principle of utilizing local assets/resources as opposed to external resources. Local resources can also be conceptualized as social networks, skills, knowledge systems, neighbourhoods and structures. I4P is aimed at strengthening the existing resources so as to effectively meet the needs of the host community. The establishment of peace conferences in northern Somaliland on the basis of clan structures is a clear example of a locally based I4P.

Secondly, an I4P can be established at any phase of the conflict continuum. Lederach (1997, p.65) describes the different stages of conflict in terms of: latent; confrontation; overt, followed by de-escalation/peaceful stages. Reyhler and Paffenholz (2001, p.7) view the dynamics of conflict along the lines of escalation, de-escalation, violent or peaceful phases. This suggests that conflict has a life cycle. Thus, at any stage of the life cycle of conflict, an I4P can be established. In the case of Zimbabwe, the *Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration* (ONHRI) was established at the de-escalation stage, which was the post-election period in 2008 and it had as its main objective to address peace challenges in Zimbabwe.

Thirdly, an I4P can be established at any level of the social strata. In his article, '*Identifying key actors in conflict situations*', Lederach (2001) identified three levels of leadership that also correspond with three levels of approaches to peacebuilding. According to him, elites sit at the top of the ladder, followed by middle range leadership positions and finally grassroots workers at the base of the strata. In terms of the establishment of an I4P, every level has the potential and capacity to set up an I4P. This explains why there is top-bottom I4P such as the National Peace Alliance created in the South, which cascaded from the top to grassroots level. In DRC, Kenya, Philippines and elsewhere, it was people at the grassroots who initiated and established I4P when they created local peace committees (LPCs) (van Tongeren, 2013, pp.41-51).

The fourth characteristic is that an I4P is a "platform for multiple stakeholders" (Unger et al., 2013, pp.4-6). Multi-stakeholders suggest that by its very nature an I4P is inclusive not only in terms of composition but in representing various constituencies in a particular community (Lederach, 1997, p.53). A council of elders in Northern Somalia that was represented by inter-clan communities is a classic example of an I4P.

The fifth and final characteristic is that I4P has objectives and functions. In other words, an I4P is not established aimlessly, rather, it is results-oriented and has a change process agenda. The major objectives of an I4P involve building capacity, consultation, facilitation, mediatory role and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities and processes of stakeholders during the lifetime of the I4P (Unger et al., 2013, pp.4-6). All these objectives are critical for peacebuilding and they find expression in LPCs, which are created to build and reinforce peace both at community and national levels.

1.2.3 Local Peace Committee (LPC) defined

The concept of a LPC has been defined from various viewpoints. For example, Bremner (1997, p.242) defines a LPC as a peace structure that is created in order to address violence. Suggested in Bremner's conception is that a LPC is a peace formation, he makes an assumption that violence can be addressed through this construction. Odendaal (2010, p.6) conceptualizes LPC as an umbrella term that represents a number of inclusive committees that operate both at community and national levels. From his perspective, it is the inclusive nature of LPCs that enables these peace structures to address violence.

In the same vein, Adan and Pklya (2006, p.12) came up with three definitions on the concept of LPC. They write that an LPC is:

- *-a conflict intervention structure that investigates both traditional and modern conflict intervention mechanisms to prevent, manage or transform intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflict;*
- *-a conflict mitigation and peacebuilding structure that integrates traditional and modern conflict interventions to address intra- and inter-tribal tensions and conflict;*
- *-a community-based structure and initiative to prevent, manage and transform intra- and inter-community conflicts.*

The above definitions present two different perspectives, the first is that the creation of LPCs represents the view that peace and violence are antithesis but conflict is perceived as a positive force that requires intervention. The second view, similar to the first, is that LPCs are created primarily to prevent violence and to manage existing conflict from further escalation to violence and to transform conflict so that it does not harm people. In that sense, LPCs exist to identify, support and promote what is involved in conflict interventions in order to achieve peace. The emphasis is on the use of non-violent means of addressing conflict. This study subscribes to the definition by Odendaal (2010, p.6) who views a LPC as 'an inclusive forum operating at district, town or village in which stakeholders take a joint responsibility to build peace within their community.' From his perspective, this committee is typically a "forum, space for dialogue and consensus building" (ibid). Consensus-building is a well-known guiding principle that

sustains the operations of LPCs. Odendaal argues that a peace committee is the most widely used terminology but concludes that the heartbeat of LPC is consensus. Writing on group decision-making, especially on consensus-building by small groups, Martinez and Montero (2007, p.204) contend that consensus is the “overall agreement among groups.” They assert that agreement is a decision making process that involves a group. They conclude that for consensus to be achieved, the following criteria must apply:

- All members of the group must support the agreement;
- No member in the group can be seen opposing the agreement;
- All members of the group can live with the agreement;
- It is an alternative which all the relevant stakeholders adhere to; and
- The agreement must have catered for legitimate concerns to the satisfaction of the group members (ibid, p.204).

As the above propositions suggest, the group involved in decision-making is bound to arrive at an agreement, which should be a result of concerted efforts by all relevant stakeholders. As mentioned already, consensus-building is a well-known guiding principle that sustains the operations of LPCs at community level.

1.2.4 Names associated with LPCs across communities

LPCs have different names in different places across the globe. They are variously described as local peacebuilding forums, peace councils, district peace advisory councils, village peace and development committees, committees for international relations (van Tongeren, 2010, p.6; 2013, p.40). Different countries use different kinds of names to describe LPCs. In Zimbabwe, they are popularly known as LPCs. In Nicaragua, they are called peace commissions (Mouly, 2013, p.51). In Kenya, they were initially named Peace and Development Committees. In Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda they are called peace committees (van Tongeren, 2013, p.42, p.49). In Colombia, they are known as local peace communities, peace committees, peace laboratories and zones of peace (ibid, p.44). In North Kivu in the DRC, they are commonly known as local committees for peace or peace cells while in Ituri, they are known as local peace initiatives (van Tongeren, 2013, p.45, p.47). In Afghanistan they were named peace *shuras* (temporary group of elders) (ibid, p.50). In Aceh, Indonesia, they named them peace zones. In El Salvador, they named them Local Zones of Peace (Iyer and Hancock, 2004, p.19). These names prove the point that LPCs are a force to reckon with in contemporary peacebuilding. As mentioned above, to interrogate LPCs in a more systematic way this study, grappled with the question of how and under what conditions informal LPCs can be institutionalized into mainstream peacebuilding, that is, from informal to formal LPCs in Zimbabwe.

1.2.5 Defining a customary court

Customary courts have been explained from different points of view. The *Penal Reform International* (2000:11) calls them a traditional/informal justice system or customary/indigenous justice system. Allen and Macdonald (2013, p.2) define customary courts as an “informal, community-based, grassroots, indigenous or traditional court.” The point is that a customary court is an institution administered by traditional leadership at the community level using customary law as its frame of reference. For purposes of this study, a customary court is a group of people involved in the diagnosis of a conflict at community level. The major characteristic features of a customary court as reported by *Penal Reform International* (2000:9) are that the judge is “known to the parties, and there is a high degree of direct community participation as well as input from both disputants, in deciding what remedy should be resorted to.” This assertion holds true of the Kikuyu of Kenya, the Luo and Azande of South Sudan, the Shona and Ndebele peoples of Zimbabwe, to not provide an exhaustive list. This study makes an attempt to build upon indigenous peacebuilding mechanisms of the Shona people in Seke district of Mashonaland province (Adan and PKalya, 2006, p.13).

Supportively, Dhungana *et al.* (2007, p.xv) argue that there is need for peace committees to build on the peacebuilding potential of indigenous mechanisms in order to be effective and sustainable. Another point to note is that methods of addressing conflict by LPCs employ a combination of both indigenous and contemporary strategies. Adan and Pklyya (2006, p.12) noted that in Kenya, LPCs employ both indigenous and contemporary conflict resolution methods. Werner (2010, p.62) states that: “indigenous methods can provide insight into cultural values and norms of a group as well as promote better understanding of their concepts of peace and reconciliation.” van Tongeren (2011) confirms that methods of addressing conflict by LPCs are based on indigenous social norms and values. Thus, the influence of traditional culture on LPCs is not suggestive but evident. Although these two institutions are different, they have some commonalities. This study has settled on peace committees. Moyo (undated, p.93) states that peace committees are set up as “purely community initiatives to address specific peace challenges in the community.” As Odendaal (2012, p.41) notes, peace committees are developed to meet the needs of the community in a particular context. The point is that informal peace committees are an inward-looking peacebuilding mechanism by a community whose main objective is to address its peace challenges using local resources.

1.2.5.1 Names associated with customary courts across communities in Africa

Among the Kikuyu communities in Kenya, a customary court is termed *kiama kia mbari* translated to mean extended family council/council of elders (Kinyanjui, 2009); the Luo people in Sudan calls it *Jo*

likweeri translated to mean traditional justice and conflict resolution centre and *Ngbanga* for the Azande of South Sudan which is translated to mean conflict resolution forum (Wassara, 2007). Among the Ndebele people of Zimbabwe it is called *inkundla* translated to mean a conflict resolution forum and *dare remhosva* (singular); *matare emhosva* (plural) among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, translated to mean a conflict resolution forum (Gombe, 2006, pp.51-56). Of particular importance is to note that in almost every community cited above and other communities, customary courts have been in use ever since the pre-colonial era and continue up to this day. In Zimbabwe, *dare remhosva* is still a force to reckon with given that it is still being used for addressing conflict by the majority of modern rural Shona people (Matavire, 2012, p.218).

1.2.6 LPCs and customary courts: commonalities and divergences

LPCs and customary courts have a number of features in common but they also have some divergences. They both address conflict and development issues at community level. As institutionalized forums for peacebuilding, they are self-regulating, employing indigenous and contemporary peace-promoting strategies and are independent from the courts of laws and the judicial authorities in their host countries (Adan and Pklya, 2006, p.12). *Penal Reform International* (2000, p.20) reports that **customary courts address** “...cases [conflicts] that fall outside the jurisdiction laid down by legislation, and apply the living indigenous law.” The same is true of LPCs in that those conflicts that fall outside mainstream courts such as interpersonal squabbles, misunderstandings between neighbours, stray cattle or **boundary squabbles are resolved through indigenous peace-promoting strategies**. Both LPCs and customary courts address these conflicts on the basis of cultural norms and values. In that sense, both LPCs and customary courts are inward-looking in that they are based on local talents and skills to addressing problems affecting the community.

The major difference between LPCs and customary courts is in their manner of creation, the constituencies represented in the structure, and levels of participation of women and youth in each structure. Customary courts are created at household and village levels. They are set up by rural people to address conflict at household and village levels and in most cases by clan members only. In Zimbabwe, such courts include a household court, a village court, sub-chief’s court and the chief’s court and they administer customary law of the Shona people. Key positions such as chairpersons, deputies and secretaries are usually male-dominated. Women, girls and boys are still marginalised in terms of occupying key positions and participation in resolving conflict in customary courts (Matavire, 2012, p.218).

In contrast, the creation of LPCs is either formal or informal. Formal LPCs are created through a peace agreement such as the *National Peace Accord of South Africa* formulated in 1991 by the African National Congress (Camay and Gordon, undated).

Informal LPCs do not enjoy official recognition from the government mainly because they are created by civil society (Odendaal, 2010, p.37). In LPCs, women occupy strategic positions such as chairperson, deputies or secretaries, positions that are usually a preserve for men in customary courts. LPCs administer both customary law and contemporary norms. Thus, the merits of inclusivity, hybridisation and gender sensitivity in LPCs have given them a very strong niche in contemporary peacebuilding initiatives. On the basis of these merits, this study established a ward-level pilot peace committee in order to test whether informal peace can be an effective peacebuilding mechanism in Seke district, Zimbabwe.

1.2.7 The conflict landscape in Zimbabwe

Prior to independence in 1980, Zimbabwe experienced a number of conflict situations that include ethnic tensions and animosities between Shona and Ndebele, colonial conflict and the liberation war which left about 50,000 people dead, others maimed and hundreds internally displaced (Chitiyo, 2000, p.1). At independence in 1980, a reconciliation policy was adopted by the new government to address racial conflict targeting only the minority white community while the majority black population remained shackled to inter-communal tensions and animosities (Huyse, 2003).

Mudeka et al. (2014, p.19) posit that by ignoring inter-communal hostilities, the new government fanned black against black hostilities that reared its ugly face on the eve of independence in 1982. This inter-black antagonism involving Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups flared up and reached a peak between 1983 and 1985, in what could be called “undeclared civil war” in the words of Huyse (2003, p.38). The government responded militarily to the hostilities and thousands of civilians were butchered (Mudeka et al., 2014, p.21).

In addition, Mudeka et al. argued that a curfew that was declared in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces between sunset and dawn, fanned starvation that affected about 400 civilians. This situation forced the closure of donor food sources within an already disrupted farming community. In some rural areas of Matabeleland and Midlands, cattle, goats or chickens belonging to Ndebele people were confiscated; cattle pen, granaries and homes were destroyed. At the height of this crisis, it was the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987, between Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU) PF and Zimbabwe

African People's Union (ZAPU) that curtailed this black against black violence but the long-standing tensions and animosities remained un-redressed (Mudeka et al., 2014, p.23-4).

In this already tense environment of the first decade of independence, the government's half-hearted attempts at reconciling the black majority and white minority did not help to address the land issue until the year 2000, when the government sanctioned the seizure of white-owned farms by black citizens, since white people were perceived to be benefiting from large tracts of fertile lands instead of the black African, the majority of people in the country. Despite attempts by white citizens to protect what they perceived as rightfully theirs, the spontaneous land occupation led to the eviction of a number of white commercial farmers, thus fanning racial conflict that the reconciliation policy initially sought to address. By 2001, it was estimated that one white commercial farmer had been killed, 26 black farm workers had been killed, 3,000 people were displaced, 11 women and girls had been raped and 1,600 had been assaulted (Mandiyanike and Musekiwa, 2014, p.49).

Inevitably, this situation was tangled with the changing political context, from a one party state into multi-parties, which saw the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the late 1990s. Given that western donors appeared sympathetic to the MDC, its relations with the ZANU PF government were strained and the bone of contention was the land invasion issue. The ZANU PF government working in cohort with war veterans, name-called the newly formed labour-based **political party**: the MDC a "puppet", "sell-out" and "western stooge." Hostilities between ZANU PF and MDC flared into electoral violence starting in 2000 (Mandiyanike and Musekiwa, 2014, p.49).

Machingura (cited in Manyonganise, 2014, p.59) states that divisions and hatred in post independence Zimbabwe were caused by electoral violence. Maruta laments that:

...the greatest violence that Zimbabweans have experienced came in the post-colonial era. More people died then than ever before, more property was destroyed then than ever before in several episodes of politically-motivated violence, especially around election time (2014, p.5-6).

This proposition indicates that Zimbabwe was and is currently faced with a huge peacebuilding challenge that includes addressing the problem of electoral violence, conflict issues and the creation of conditions needed for a peaceful future. Mandiyanike and Musekiwa (2014, p.35) contend that perpetrators and victims of violence cannot continue to live together and expect to work together in building a peaceful future unless and until the problem of violence experienced in 2008 has been addressed.

Paradoxically, in 2009, an inclusive government was formed and it acknowledged the existence of violence, polarization, animosities and hostilities which pre-dated independence but also reared its ugly face in post-independence Zimbabwe. Despite efforts by the government to address electoral violence and its impact on community life through Article 7 of the *Global Political Agreement* (GPA) (2008), violence has continued to haunt the well-being of communities (Matyszak, 2013, p. iii). However, there have been some glimpses of hope raised by the anticipated I4P strategy known as the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), which was adopted by the incumbent government in May 2013 (Zembe, 2013, p.34). The window of opportunity thereof exists for all Zimbabweans to live in peace through the NPRC programme. Yet, "...polarization, divisions, conflict and intolerance that has characterised Zimbabwean politics and society in recent times" as highlighted in the *Global Political Agreement* of September 2008 (GPA, 2008, p.1) continue to pose a challenge for post-conflict peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

It is an accepted belief that conflict in Zimbabwe is primarily politically induced and this has resulted in the politicisation of local communities with the attendant high levels of conflict, giving birth to electoral violence. In light of the identified problem, one of the questions that this study addressed was how and under what conditions can a violent community become peaceful once again? Before addressing this question, the concept of peacebuilding should be clarified in order to establish a backdrop for understanding the conditions under which post-conflict peacebuilding can be achieved.

1.2.8 Peacebuilding defined

This study is written within a peacebuilding context. The term peacebuilding was a coinage by Johan Galtung in the 1970s against the backdrop of the World War II. In his book: *Peace, War and Defence: Essays in peace research* (1976) peacebuilding is described as: "the creation of structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the root causes of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace, management and conflict resolution" (p.297-98). Galtung ascribes 'the creation of structures to promote sustainable peace' to peacebuilding. While he expressed this view, Galtung has always emphasized the curative and preventive nature of peacebuilding to both conflict and violence and as an approach that "positively... builds better relations" (Galtung, 1985, p.151). Thus, Galtung promulgated the notion that peacebuilding was about building relations characterised by co-existence, cordial harmony, tolerance and respect between individuals, groups and nations and the nonviolent resolution of conflict.

In the late 1990s, Paul John Lederach described peacebuilding as: "a process that addresses structural issues, social dynamics of relationship building and the development of a supportive infrastructure for

peace” (1997, p.21). According to him, peacebuilding means more than the creation of structures but a course of actions aimed at addressing strained relationships with a view to rebuild relationships. In summarizing the above propositions, it can be concluded that peacebuilding signifies the idea that peace is more than just the absence of violence, but constitutes a positive state of being that needs to be built and reinforced.

In my Shona language to build is translated *kuvaka*, which encompasses the idea of putting both tangible and intangible elements in place. For intangible elements such as relationships, there is a phrase *kuvaka ukama/vukama*, loosely translated as relationship building. In its original context, *kuvaka hukama* encompasses attitudes, behaviours and a web of affinities directed at restoring, enhancing, maintaining, supporting and reinvigorating existing trusts, networks, reciprocating love, constructive resolution of misunderstandings and goodwill towards each other. At the community level, individuals concerned with relationship building lend and borrow from each other. If they are women, they should be seen asking for salt from each other, or a mother reporting misdeeds done by a neighbour’s daughter. Neighbours should be seen accompanying each other to a funeral nearby and making contributions to others. This partial description of social and economic dynamics in which individuals and groups develop their own ways of coping with problems in order to build a positive state of being in the home, between neighbours and the community, is what is understood as peacebuilding in the current study. A detailed discussion on peacebuilding is in Chapter four.

1.2.9 Defining transition

The term “transition” is synonymously associated with the four different epochs that characterize Zimbabwe’s history namely: the pre-colonial era; colonialism; liberation war and post independence era. The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (2009) notes that these “different eras have deeply influenced each other” and each epoch has left imprints on society, fostering either peace or violence. The colonial, liberation war and post independence eras are major developments that have taken place in the country now called Zimbabwe and have led to various institutional changes. Developments include those events and non-events, whether by design or default, that have taken place and have involved the Shona people from around the 1800s to the 2000s.

In the community under study, the community has experienced a number of transitional developments. These include the entry of the Nguni fugitives, the Ndebele people in particular, who came to Zimbabwe in the 1800s, followed by European settlers in the 1890s, the liberation war between 1960s and 1970s, the attainment of independence in 1980 and electoral conflict in the 2000s. These developments have

influenced changes in the social, economic, political and religious life of the Shona people and have potentially catapulted the transformation of Shona institutions. Shona people have a number of institutions but I have singled out *matare emhosva* to illustrate the point that Shona people have experienced a transition. As such, the current study is coming from the viewpoint that Shona people are not a fixed community but a progressive and evolving people. Thus, like any other community, Shona people have and are experiencing a transition up to this day.

However, it is important to note that a transition is different from a decline, collapse, disintegration or a breakdown. A decline involves changes but not for the better. Decay and decadence best describes what occurs when a decline has taken place. A decline occurs when an institution experiences a progressive disintegration as opposed to a shift. A collapse connotes a situation usually not easy to recover from (Springs undated, pp.102-3). On one hand, disintegration is best described by the term schisms, implying a situation in which institutions of a particular culture are no longer capable of working in unison because of the inherent divisions. On the other hand, a breakdown is characterized by lack of self-determination, loss of creative force or the infrastructure for self-preservation and maintenance by a particular institution (Springs, undated, p.101). In this study, I argue that *matare emhosva* has experienced a transition, not a breakdown, collapse, disintegration or decline. The continual existence of *matare emhosva* from as far back as the pre-colonial era to the present era demonstrates how Shona institutions have coped with and survived a breakdown, collapse, disintegration or decline over the years.

Similarly, the emergence of informal peace committees as a diverse segment of *matare emhosva* is a demonstration of institutional transformation that has taken place involving Shona institutions. Of particular importance is to note that *matare emhosva* and peace committees are employed within constantly changing social, economic, political and religious environments.

Secondly, as a follow up to this discussion, transition is taken to mean structural transformation of community in terms of its socio-technical practices, cultural and patterns of social, economic and political life (Rotmans and Kemp, 2003, p.9; Loorbach and Rotman, 2006, p.2). In the current study, the emergence of peace committees alongside village courts, chief's courts in modern Shona communities is indicative of institutional transformation. As such, the current study does not only have a backward looking perspective but it also is forward looking in that it seeks to construct future peacebuilding prospects using local resources relevant to the Shona people with the possibility of a more universal application.

1.2.10 Community defined

Community is one of the foundations of the life of humankind because people are born and they live their lives in a community (Elias, 1974, p.71). The concept of community is attached to phrases like community as a place; community as shared interests or values; community as a platform for social networks, and community as people (Smith, 2002; Keller, 2003, p.38; Glanz *et al.*, 2008). Central to the concept of community is collective life.

Tillet (1999, p.162) contends that community represents a geographical area occupied by a group of people and membership is determined by common values and interests. This clarifies the up-and-coming development in which different groups of people are identified by their common values and interests. The emphasis is to bundle individuals and groups subscribing to common values and interests together into a community sharing the same geographical space. As Chanaiwa (1973, p.19) advises, Shona people “do not share only common language but also history, traditions and religion.” This means that Shona people are a community; this aspect was central to the current study. Anyanwu (1992) (cited in Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003, p.203) emphasizes that “ a community includes a group of people spread over different places, who can still be closely in touch and be able to plan and act in concert.” This view suggests that community involves people living in a particular location, able to connect each other, initiate and realise shared values and interests. This explains that communities have the capacity to respond to threats, to shared values and interests at any given point.

1.2.11 Transition and culture

Culture is how people do things, the way they think, for instance, what Shona people do when a conflict occurs, what they do about violence or think about peace and how to sustain it in their communities. Just as every home has its own culture, communities too have their own culture, that is ,how they do things. However, every culture can mutate and blend with other cultures (Young, 2008, p.12, 3). Werner (2010, p.62) points out that “every culture is fluid and flexible” and therefore, “those elements relating to cultural norms of conflict resolution and peace-making are open to influences and practices resulting from constant changing environments.” This suggests that every culture is open to various modifications in terms of how things are done.

Similar to a transition, cultural change takes a generation, that is, from 25 to 50 years according to Rotmans, Kemp and van Asselt (2001, p.017). During the change process, breakdown, variation, deviation and selection takes place resulting in new ideas, practices, values, perceptions and techniques under-going modification (Rotmans and Kemp, 2003, p.14). This aspect is central to a study such as this,

which seeks to build on local capacities existing within a community as an effective approach to building peace.

In the same vein, Harlacher et al. (2006) (cited in Schaefer, 2010, p.507) posit that: “traditions are in a continuous process of change, with differing dynamics and rates of change in different segments of society.” In reality, *matare emhosva* has experienced changes over the years in terms of approaches to conflict. The causal factors to these changes could vary from place to place but the bottom line is that *matare emhosva* have changed over time (Rotmans and Kemp, 2003, p.10). As already noted, the emergence of peace committees is one of the indicators of cultural changes experienced by the Shona people in which traditional and contemporary strategies merged and bred LPCs.

1.2.12 Transition and peacebuilding

Previous studies tended to investigate transition or peacebuilding, not both (Friedlander *et al.*, 1999, p.507; Rotmans *et al.*, 2001, p.16). I argue that studying either transition or peacebuilding in isolation overlooks the inter-relatedness of transition and peacebuilding. In other words, studying one, not both, creates conflict between transition and peacebuilding rather than integration. For example, existing literature at the local community level has either focused on peacebuilding only (Lederach, 1995; 1997) or attempted to look at transition only (Friedlander *et al.*, 1999, p.507; Rotmans et al., 2001, 0.16) without clearly examining their linkages. The current study seeks to fill this gap. Thus, it is important to examine peacebuilding and transition since this study investigates ‘*peacebuilding among Shona communities in transition*,’ which in itself is an area of contestation.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Many peacebuilding challenges facing modern communities in Zimbabwe have their roots in the problem of establishing a strategy, mechanism or approach that contributes to sustainable peace in post-independence Zimbabwe which has remained unresolved until today. These peacebuilding challenges are compounded by a myriad of problems emanating from the legacy of violent conflict situations, dating back to the pre-colonial era, colonialism, liberation war and post-independence electoral conflicts. Muzavazi (2014, p.100) supports this notion by indicating that, “the history of Zimbabwe is a continuum of political violence and social injustice perpetrated by one group of individuals against another.” Problematic relations stemming from tribal conflicts in the pre-colonial era, the racial conflict during colonialism and inter-communal tensions and hostilities have all left negative imprints posing a threat to peace in modern communities.

Accordingly, from the mid 1800s to the 2000s, Zimbabwean communities have not realized sustainable peace in terms of addressing animosities and the healing of wounds involving a range of challenges: racial and inter-tribal conflicts between blacks and whites; Shona and the Ndebele peoples; the horrors of the colonial conflict; the subsequent civil war and electoral conflict in the 2000s (Maruta 2014, p.11). As observed by Machakanja (2010, p.1), since independence, sustainable peace in Zimbabwe has remained a mirage. She says the impact of violent conflict in June 2000, March 2002, May 2005 and June 2008 have been destructive to the extent that prospects of sustainable peace through pro-peace policies were obstructed and ultimately dashed. She notes that the top-down approaches to peace since independence in 1980 have tended to neglect local communities as agents that can play significant roles in violence prevention and reconciliation processes. Thus, the failure by Zimbabwean elites to recognize and create an inclusive approach to reconciliation of the aftermath of violent conflicts negatively impacted the thorny road to sustainable peace (Machakanja, 2010, p.1).

It is argued that the electoral conflict in the 2000s is the worst conflict ever visited local communities after the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987 in post-independent Zimbabwe. This period was marked by incessant violence (Maruta, 2014, p.7). However, violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe cannot be understood without due consideration of the socio-economic and political factors of the early 2000s.

The socio-economic context in the 2000s

By the turn of the century, the year 2000 onwards, the economy had already taken a nosedive, exacerbated by the accelerated land reform practices. Further problems were engendered by the three years of poor harvests due to poor rainfall experienced in the southern African region. The declining foreign currency reserves from key sectors such as tobacco, mining, manufacturing and tourism compounded the problem of government's fixed foreign currency exchange rate of US\$1: Z\$55 implemented in October 2000 (Chakanetsa *et al.*, 2003, pp.7,23).

The economic quagmire in the 2000s was aggravated by a number of economic and politically expedient factors originating in the preceding decade as testified by a wide range of authors (Maclean, 2002, p.522; Solidarity Peace Trust (SPT), 2007c, p.18; Saunders, 2000, p.85; Dashwood, 2002, p.78; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (ZHRNF), 1998, p.6; Gukurume, 2010, p.62). These exacerbating factors included: the failure of the economic adjustment programme in the 1990s to arrest Zimbabwe's economic woes which were beginning to take root; the awarding of unbudgeted gratuities amounting to Z\$ 4-5 billion to 50 000 war veterans in 1997; the move to designate and seize about 1,500 productive large scale commercial farms for resettlement and redistribution without adequate funding; and the unilateral military

intervention in the DRC in 1998 (Saunders, 2000, p.85; Dashwood, 2002, p.78). Taken together, these factors contributed significantly towards an economic tumult that persisted into the subsequent years.

In defiance of the economic tumult, the ZANU PF government was complicit in the violent farm invasions of white commercial farms between 1998 and February 2000 by disgruntled war veterans. This fast-track land policy contributed to the sharp decline in agricultural production, since there was a reduction in planting area for large-scale commercial sector by 74 per cent (Glantz and Cullen, 2003, p.9). For example, commercial farms, which used to produce about 40 to 60 per cent of maize, experienced a 50 per cent decline in maize production between 1998 and 2001. Accordingly, only about 1,590,000 tonnes were produced between 1998 and 2001 while maize production between 2002 and 2007 was lowered down to 827,000 tonnes, a clear indication that large-scale planting areas were heavily reduced (Richardson, 2007, p.693).

Similarly, cash crops such as tobacco that used to supply about 40 per cent of foreign currency were also compromised owing to the land invasion exercise. To that effect, tobacco output fell by 67 per cent between 2000 and 2003. Also, cattle stock, which traditionally accounted for 90 per cent of beef exports experienced a significant decline due to farm invasions. Resultantly, beef exports registered a decline of about 70 per cent, which translated to 1,3 million by December 2001 and down to 400,000 by July 2002 (Glantz and Cullen, 2003, p.9). The collapse of the agricultural sector had a negative impact on the manufacturing sector's performance, which was already dwindling due to the economic decline experienced in the late 1990s. This state of affairs bred other economic problems such as unemployment and lack of foreign currency which resulted in serious fuel shortages, electricity power cuts and dwindling raw materials, bringing the mining sector to its knees (SPT, 2007c, p.19).

By November 2002, an induced shortage of foreign currency due to the prevailing economic conditions bred a parallel market system in which US\$1 was exchanged for Z\$2000. Owing to this development, there was an accelerated shortage of basics such as sugar, cooking oil, maize meal from the market, leading to skyrocketing costs of basic commodities and services beyond the reach of many ordinary people. Chakanetsa *et al.* (2003, p.23) posit that by March 2003, government responded to curb market forces by devaluing the Zimbabwe currency to a rate of US\$ 1: Z\$824 from Z\$55 to increase foreign currency reserves, but this move did not make any significant improvement to the ailing economy.

Due to shortage of foreign currency, government could not import maize meal for the food insecure population in the country. Chakanetsa and colleagues (2003) reported that by March 2003, the World

Food Programme through its partners distributed food aid to 5,2 million people out of 11,7 million with inflation standing at 228 per cent. Thus, the period that ran from 2003 to 2004 witnessed an increase in temporary and permanent migration of citizens out of Zimbabwe. It was estimated that the number of people who left the country for overseas and neighbouring countries ranged over two million (Chakanetsa *et al.*, 2003, p.14).

Ironically, the turn of 2005 saw the incumbent government implementing another controversial policy code named ‘operation *murambatsina*’ (cleaning the filth) in the month of May. The exercise was meant to dislodge all alleged informal traders and occupants, mainly those residing in the cities (Action Aid, 2005, p.1). As the survey by Action Aid (2005, p.1) showed, the consequences of this operation reflected a situation similar in countries undergoing a civil war, especially that the exercise was implemented by security agents such as soldiers and police officers under government directive. About 1,193,370 city-dwellers were affected. This translated into 70 per cent cases involving shelter destruction, 76 per cent involved informal traders who lost their sources of income, 22 per cent involved children who were displaced resulting in them being deprived of their education, 48 per cent worth of property was destroyed, health cases for the displaced deteriorated by 25 per cent, household safety and insecurity stood at 44 per cent, 40 per cent resulted in the disruption of family unit and 35 per cent resulted in increased vulnerability for women, children and orphans. Since the exercise targeted city-dwellers, Harare accounted for 71 per cent while Bulawayo had 30 per cent casualties (Action Aid, 2005, p.2, 3). Although the exercise targeted urban dwellers, some rural communities could not cope with the influx as victims of the *Murambatsvina* were ferried to their rural homes.

As if that was not enough, around the same period in 2005, the poverty-stricken populace was faced with a multiplicity of challenges among which included shortage of basic commodities in supermarkets and food outlets, skyrocketing and destabilisation of prices both in the formal and informal markets (Gukurume, 2010, p.1). According to SPT (2007c, p.18, 19), government responded by putting price control measures in place, a mechanism which exacerbated the crisis as inflation rose from 782 per cent in February 2006 to 913 per cent by April and to 1, 185 per cent by June 2006. The scenario shoved government into printing more money as from 2006 in which three zeros were first cut off to ease the carriage of large sums of notes. Since then, money supply increased from 1, 638.4 per cent in January 2007 to 17, 073.1 per cent by July 2007 (Sachikonye *et al.*, 2007, p.2).

Subsequently, the turn of 2007 was characterized by a number of extremely severe economic problems. For example, by 1 March 2007, prices of basic commodities escalated by 40 per cent within a week while

the Z\$ crashed against the South African Rand from Z\$600 to Z\$1,200. Also, by 2 March 2007, commuter providers made a third increase in fares up to Z\$2000 per trip in two months. For employees who were commuting, monthly minimum transport allowance was standing at Z\$90,000 per month. The irony of it all was that minimum industrial wage was below Z\$100,000 while the PDL stood at Z\$686,000 (SPT, 2007a, p.7). In response to this economic crash, government adopted salary top-up strategies but there was no significant improvement on the economy due to the run-away inflation. The situation for workers in the civil service became dreadful when on March 7, 2007, national civil service salary top-up of Z\$215,000, only 30 per cent of the PDL, was implemented but this coincided with a top-up induced commuter omnibus increase in transport costs from Z\$2,000 to Z\$5,000. As a result, some workers resorted to staying at home, arguing that it was costing less than going to work (SPT, 2007a, p.8).

Conversely, in an environment characterized by the economic tumult, the informal economy grew. A study by Gukurume (2010, p.63) on informal economy activities during 2008 revealed that in trying to cope with economic shocks, Zimbabweans devised a plethora of survival strategies ranging from conventional and clandestine dealings. He goes on to say:

Most of [the people] them had to quit their jobs, which forced them to engage in a multiplicity of informal activities as survival strategies, such as money changing. This activity of informal foreign currency exchange led to the proliferation of the phenomenon popularly termed ‘burning money’ (*kupisa mari*)... During this era burning money became... a messiah to their meagre salaries in formal employment. ...It was so viable a system of wealth generation that many people left their formal employment to venture into the business on a full time basis (Gukurume, 2010, p.63).

Analysts such as Sachikonye and colleagues have estimated that about four million people were deriving their livelihoods from the informal economy during the period under review (Sachikonye *et al* 2007, p.2). To numerous people, informal foreign currency exchange brought both blessings and curses with it. On one hand, some people amassed wealth amidst this economic quandary, on the other, some were languishing in abject poverty due to increasing inequalities and criminal activities such as corruption and clandestine informal trading (Gukurume, 2010, p.62). By the time of elections on 29 March 2008, the economic lives of ordinary citizens were appalling.

According to a report by ZESN (2008, p.16), Zimbabweans were faced with runaway inflation that was over two million per cent amidst acute shortage of essentials such as drugs, fuel and foreign currency. As a result of this economic crisis, the Zimbabwe currency by August 2008, three months after the June run-

off saw 10 zeros being slashed off from the largest note Z\$ 100 billion, a special agro-cheque (Z\$ 100,000,000,000) which was re-valued to Z\$10 (Pilossof, 2009, p.295; ZHRNF, 2008b, p.4).

In view of the above socio-economic context, it can be strongly argued that the emergence of election violence in 2008 was adding to the pre-existing levels of violence, already high due to high and increasing poverty and inequality levels over the last decades. The inconclusive electoral conflict in 2008 led to the formation of a government of national unity (GNU) on 15 September 2008, which saw three major political parties signing a peace process called the GPA that expired on 31 July 2013. Thus, although these factors appear disjointed and isolated, they had a direct bearing in creating an economic quandary in Zimbabwe that persisted until 2015. The economic quagmire in the early 2000s bred a political crisis (SPT, 2007c, p.19).

The Political context in the 2000s

The political crisis in Zimbabwe dates back to the era when the national constitution referendum was rejected by the opposition and civic groups on 12 February 2000 with a “No vote” win (54,4 per cent) against the ruling party (45,3 per cent) (Hamill, 2000, p.131; Dashwood, 2002, p.95; Institute of Justice and Reconciliation and SPT, 2006, p.11; SPT, 2007c, p.12; and Releer, 2008, p.5; Groves, 2009, p.65). The scenario was further compounded by the June 2000 parliamentary elections in which the MDC won a near majority votes of 57 out of the 120 contested seats (Maclean, 2002, p.514; National Catholic Reporter, 2007, p.2a; Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.5; Releer, 2008, p.5; Bamfo, 2010, p.118). The emergence of a new wave of election violence that characterized Zimbabwe’s political terrain in the ensuing years can be attributed to the two political activities in 2000: the referendum and the parliamentary elections. Until the June 2000 parliamentary elections, Zimbabwe was a *de facto* one party state (Redress and Amani Trust, 2005, p.10; and ZESN, 2008, p.15).

The Institute of Justice and Reconciliation and SPT (2006, p.11); SPT (2004, p.8; 2008b, p.25) reported that election violence in Zimbabwe was exacerbated by a plethora of political factors created by the ruling party, among them were: the institutionalization of the youth militias under the guise of national youth service programme in 2001; the promulgation of the Public Order and Security Act in 2002; politicization of state security forces; intensification of the use of violence as a political tool; resuscitation of a selective version of the history of the liberation war and the land issue; and the use of politically loaded authoritarian nationalistic language and characterization of the opposition as an internal foe of the state and a disguised western stooge. Thus, the 2008 electoral violence was the worst conflict ever visited Zimbabwe since independence. This election occurred within an already volatile political environment

resulting from the above political factors. Between the years 2000 and 2008, electoral violence was a menace, which affected different sections of the population in varying proportions. Reports by Reeler (2008, p.1) and Reeler *et al* (2009, p.181) showed that between 2000 and 2008, there were about 4,765 cases related to electoral violence with 2008 considered the worst ever since 2000. Thus, vindicating Tshuma's (2010, p.1) argument that: "if scars of the past are hidden away there will always come a time when those scars will suppurate and become a poison that will engulf all of us even the future generation."

It may be too early to predict how the colonial, protracted conflict and post-independence electoral violence have affected the moral fabric of the modern political community but all signs point to the direction that there was a breakdown of peaceable social norms and values. However, the problem of establishing a strategy, mechanism or approach that contributes to sustainable peace in post-independence Zimbabwe remains unresolved and thus, the current study is both backward and forward looking. Since informal LPC are increasingly making remarkable achievements in addressing peace challenges bedevilling local communities in post-conflict situations, this study interrogated in detail the contributions of informal LPCs to peacebuilding in a post-violent Zimbabwe with a view to explore possibilities of transforming informal LPCs into mainstream peacebuilding in the country under review.

1.4 Overall objective

While literature confirmed that informal peace committees are continuing to make a marked difference in contributing to peace in their host communities, this study created a WPC in order to confirm whether and under what conditions an informal peace committee can be an effective means of addressing peace challenges affecting local communities in Ward 8 of Seke district?

1.5 Research objectives

A WPC was created in the current study to achieve the overall objective broken down into the following research objectives, which are:

- To examine whether and under what conditions a post-violent community can become peaceful once again;
- To review the means by which peace can be built;
- To test the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8 of Seke district and to draw lessons for the future;
- To explore possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe;

1.6 Rationale for studying Shona people

Shona people have a well-developed and functional indigenous conflict resolution mechanism popularly known as *matare emhosva*. Village heads, headmen or chiefs administer *matare emhosva*. These traditional leaders serve as legitimate custodians of community life in their areas of jurisdiction. As a result, whenever a conflict occurs, the village head, headman or chief sits down at a designated place for hours to diagnose a conflict until consensus is reached. They handle conflicts such as theft, seduction, fights or destruction of crops by stray livestock and many more (Gwaravanda, 2011, p.149).

However, from the 1890s, contact with European institutions resulted in the existence of a dual legal system: Roman Dutch law and *matare emhosva*. The colonial government imposed a European legal system on the Shona *matare emhosva*. As a result, the colonial government nurtured a new system of addressing conflict until independence in 1980. Addressing conflict became an area dominated by the European legal system. After independence, the new government re-institutionalized the dual system but giving higher priority to the European legal system. Thus, again technically, the traditional system, *matare emhosva* continued to be compromised (Moyo, undated, p.91).

Although *matare emhosva* experienced institutional transformation during the colonial era, it is clear that the system never collapsed, because at local level conflicts continue to be resolved through *matare emhosva*. And yet, local communities continue to experience electoral violence resulting from polarization, divisions and other conflict issues. In 2008, isolated electoral violent cases between members of the ZANU PF and MDC occurred in Shona communities and elsewhere; most if not all of these electoral conflicts were not settled by *matare emhosva*.

The choice of Shona communities was informed by the conviction that historically, Shona people have “shown themselves amazingly resilient” to transitional phases (Plangger, cited in Kabweza, 2002, p.6). This study sees Shona communities as victims of both colonial and electoral conflicts on one hand, but also, as a community that has engaged in planned actions on the other, to create response mechanisms from which they gain strength to cope more successfully with peace challenges affecting their well-being. As such, they have been able to successfully mobilize indigenous peacebuilding resources for several decades through the creation of *matare emhosva*. In the recent past, a proto-type of hybridized local peacebuilding initiatives popularly known as informal LPC in Zimbabwe, created under the aegis of local villages, has become a game changer in peacebuilding in some Shona communities.

This study was intended to explore whether Shona people can draw from what they already know and have in their communities in order to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. In other words, this study was interested in finding out how and under what conditions local communities can use what they already have and know in order to build peace in their local contexts. Even more important is to find ways of enhancing those local resources for peace, in particular informal peace committees, so that they can more effectively help to build sustainable peace in Shona communities and perhaps across Zimbabwe.

1.7 Why study LPCs?

Although *matare emhosva* is an important resource for peacebuilding, this study was focused on informal peace committees for two reasons. In the first place, informal peace committees are a diverse segment of *matare emhosva* in that they are building on the conflict resolution traditions of Shona people. The second reason is that LPCs are more inclusive than *matare emhosva* in that they draw from all social groups in the communities such as elders, women and youth (Adan and Pkalya, 2006, p.15). In *matare emhosva*, membership is by age and clan, while in LPCs it is by selection. Further, Adan and Pkalya said that the selection process increases chances of expanding the constituencies of LPCs because they are not built on the basis of clan members and elderly people but are inclusive of all members that comprise a social group, including the vulnerable and marginalized.

Another overriding view is that LPCs are a sub-category of I4P: there are two things that can be said in that regard. The first is that a woman or a man can chair LPCs and there are no restrictions on women in the decision-making processes. Second, conflicts can be settled amicably by LPCs working in collaboration with the various stakeholders such as elders, women's groups, youth, ZRP or religious groups at the community level. From this, it is clear that LPCs have the potential to harness all groups of people in communities that are affected by conflict and violence (Envision Zimbabwe, 2015) and these trends and patterns are not found in *matare emhosva* irrespective of the fact that these vulnerable and marginalized groups often bore the heaviest brunt of conflict and violence, much more than their male counterparts. Envision Zimbabwe declared that: "When conflict and violence occur, it affects men, women, youth and children differently. Women and the girl child are the most affected by conflict" (2015). Thus, Envision Zimbabwe suggests that women and youth should play an active role in peace committees.

In *matare emhosva*, women and youth do not have an active role in decision-making processes, and these trends and patterns continue to exist and are indeed a threat to peace at community level. These trends are compounded by traditional gender roles which do not accord equality between men and women (Moyo,

undated, p.90). The non-active participation of women and youth in *matare emhosva* is an impediment to sustainable peacebuilding at local community levels. **LPCs harness men** alongside vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women and youth. As Moyo (undated, p.92) argues, LPCs “are structures established by community members to be responsible for peace within the community.” He notes that a peace committee is created by the community and concludes that it includes “civil servants, church leaders, traditional leaders, state security sector actors, political party leaders, women, youth and other stakeholders such as organizations operating at the community level” (p.93). In view of these merits of LPCs, this study focused on LPCs because they “are inclusive and take account the diversity of needs and experiences existing at the local level” (Dhungana *et al.*, 2007, p.xv). Dhungana et al. (2007, p.xv) states that LPCs need to be locally owned and inclusive in order to be sustainable. They also note that LPCs must take into account the diverse needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women and youth, since failure to apprehend these vulnerable groups can be an incentive for a doomed peacebuilding process. These criteria are bundled together in LPCs.

It is clear that the active participation of women and youth in LPCs is a demonstration that all social groups in the village are represented in a peace structure. Envision Zimbabwe (2015) points out that women and youth participation in peace committees is a key component of peacebuilding at community level. Though peace committees are not indigenous of Shona people, insights from LPCs are pivotal and they provide a basis on which inclusivity of the vulnerable and marginalized groups can be achieved at local level. From this, Dhungana *et al.* (2007, p.9) concluded that peace committees enable local communities to be aware of conflict dynamics affecting them and to develop mechanisms of coping with those conflicts. Moyo (undated, p.92) concludes that peace committees are an “important community I4P.” To interrogate informal LPCs systematically, this study established a WPC in Seke district and addressed the question of whether and under what conditions informal peace committees can be transformed into mainstream peacebuilding in a country like Zimbabwe which has seen a rapid increase of informal peace committees but has not fully embraced them into mainstream peacebuilding. The setting up of an informal peace committee was made possible by the fact that the current study was predominantly participatory from the design, implementation and evaluation.

1.8 The Participatory Action Research (PAR) design

The choice of a design goes along with the aim of the study. As its overall objective, this study established a WPC in order to test the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8 of Seke district. Within that framework, PAR was considered an appropriate research design given that there are some similarities existing between PAR and peacebuilding. Both PAR and peacebuilding bring people together

to address common problems and are relationship-oriented. Peacebuilding acknowledges that peace is no accident and therefore requires planning, commitment, participation of relevant stakeholders or cooperative relationships and these are critical components in PAR. To achieve peace, individuals and groups need to form partnerships because peace is a result of group efforts and networks between stakeholders (Maruta, 2008, p.7).

Additionally, peace, trust, and social justice are all values that underpin both PAR and peacebuilding. In peacebuilding, networks are a major component for peaceful communities (van Niekerk and van Niekerk, 2009, p.133). This explains the undeniable link between PAR and peacebuilding. On this basis, since peace is both a critical value and a means in peacebuilding processes, PAR was identified as the most appropriate design. Letts *et al.* (2007, p.4) argue that PAR “involves individuals and groups researching their own personal beings, socio-cultural settings and experiences. They reflect on their values, shared realities, collective meanings, needs and goals.” In the current study, peace was one of the critical values upon which the study was anchored. As such, in order to test whether and under what conditions informal peace committee can be an effective means of achieving peace in local communities, PAR was employed. In the process, the researcher worked with a small advisory team of 14 members to put in place a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district.

1.8.1 The characteristics of PAR

Characteristically, PAR is participatory both in theory and practice (Karlsen, 1991, p.152; Barbera, 2008, p.145). This explains why the process of setting up of a WPC in Ward 8 was a group work. In the process of setting up a WPC, the district focal person and I assigned each other duties and responsibilities. Also, because of the participative nature of the process, members of the WPC conducted a self-evaluation on 16 January 2015. The chairperson of the peace committee facilitated this evaluation and I was taking notes as well as voice recording the proceedings in order to capture data since the results of the evaluation were to be presented to the PAG in order to draw lessons.

In addition, PAR is predominantly qualitative in its approach to research (Bloor et al., 2001, p.30). It produces data based on individual people’s beliefs, experiences and life-views. For that reason, the results that came out from both the process involving series of planning meetings and evaluation of the peace committee were presented descriptively. As a result, because of the qualitative nature of PAR, I was able to capture emphatic quotes, jargon, stories told by participants and values expressed during meetings and through this qualitative data the PAG was able to understand the meanings attributed to participants and informants and to draw lessons from the self-evaluation.

Apart from that, PAR is reflective (Karlsen, 1991, p.148; van Niekerk and van Niekerk, 2009, p.136). This suggests that plans and decisions concerning the setting up of a WPC were not made haphazardly but systematically owing to reflective decisions. In the process leading to the formation of a WPC, decisions were thought through, reversed and turned upside down and inside out in order to come up with a well-thought-out and meaningful alternative that we all embraced. For instance, at one point we discussed the issue of inclusivity of the peace committee, that it should include both ZANU (PF) and MDC members. We made this discussion before meeting the provincial focal person and when we met the provincial focal person what came out of the discussion was the theme of inclusivity of the peace committee.

During our discussions with the provincial focal person on 17 October 2014, we noted that some communities especially in Mudzi district, Mashonaland east province, members of the peace committees who were ZANU (PF) were not for the idea of having MDC members become stakeholders in the same peace committee. After considering the pros and cons that came out of this discussion we resolved that a WPC should first be established and then issues of inclusivity could be dealt with gradually as we go. This piece of information indicates that the process was reflective.

Another characteristic of PAR is that it is responsive to emerging issues (Stiefel, 2001, p.273; Checkland and Poulter, 2006, p.6). In Ward 8, I discovered that the call for a WPC was a response to polarization that had been experienced by communities especially in the run-up to elections from 2002 to 2008. Therefore, it became apparent that setting up a WPC was challenging as in almost every discussion the issue of polarization was either mentioned directly or alluded to. Accordingly, the approach of engaging local communities needed to be participatory because PAR sought to empower local communities to take responsibility to addressing peace challenges affecting them. In the current study, almost every characteristic of PAR mentioned above was applied through the PAR cycle.

1.8.2 The PAR cycle

PAR is not a linear process as is the case with traditional research, rather it is cyclical (Ahmed, 2009:24). These cycles are by nature knowledge producing and thus bringing about a new practice. These cycles were:

Stage 1-2: Problem identification and action planning: A full picture of the situation on the ground was created and a plan to set up a WPC was put in place working with the district, provincial focal persons and myself. The problems in Ward 8 were multifaceted. They involved hunger, lack of funds to pay school fees, stock theft, robbery, rape, and domestic violence,

polarization along political affiliation and disrupted livelihoods due to poor harvests in 2014 and 2015 agricultural seasons. Some of these problems emerged during the initial stages while other problems emerged after the WPC was already established. It was these peace challenges that prompted us to set up a pilot peace committee in Ward 8 in order to come up with modalities on how these problems could be addressed through a peace committee and with other stakeholders. This first stage took place between 30 September 2014 and 6 November 2014 and the criteria and composition for the would-be WPC members was developed.

Stage 3: Taking action: This stage involved putting resolutions from the planning meetings, discussions and reflections into action which **culminated in** the setting up of a WPC. On Friday 7 November 2014, a call for an information meeting was made by the district focal person who was spearheading the setting up of a WPC, I assisted him during the process. Subsequently, a 15 member WPC was established on 7 November 2014 using the self-selection model (see discussion on self-selection model in Chapter eight).

Stage 4: Evaluation and re-planning: evaluation was carried out in two phases, the first involved self-evaluation of activities that took place between 7 November 2014 and December 2014 which was made on 16 January 2015. The second and final review was a preliminary evaluation of the WPC initiative by the researcher on 22 July 2015.

1.8.3 Formation of the Participatory action group (PAG) as co-researchers

By the time that fieldwork was to begin, there were already individuals inclusive of the researcher that had been trained by the ecumenical church leaders' forum (ECLF) in Ward 8 through a three-day conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation (CPMRT) sensitization workshop in 2013. Prior to the setting up of the WPC in 2014, the steering committee involved the ECLF provincial and district focal persons and myself. This three component steering team was not formed haphazardly; the process involved a series of meetings. To avoid "cognitive leaps" (Morse *et al.*, 2002, p.13) we picked up from where we left to reconfirm our previous discussions and plans. Previous discussions gave rise to new ideas and insights to the extent that opinion shifts became a characteristic feature. For example, during our discussions on 30 September 2014, we had planned to use snow-ball sampling to select would-be peace committee members. After considering the pros and cons on 10 October 2014, we decided to use personal testimonies by individual would-be peace committee participants as one of the criteria.

Apart from that, when we met again on 15 October 2014, we kept on “checking and rechecking” [in order] “to build a solid foundation” (Morse *et al.*, 2002, p.13). In consultation with the district and provincial focal person on 17 October 2014, we resolved that a purposive technique should be used to select would-be peace committee members. Preliminary planning phases ended with the write up of the criteria for would-be peace committee members that took us to 6 November 2014. Subsequently, we identified individuals that were trained and co-opted them in the circle of would-be peace committee members’ not raw community members. We considered it suitable to set up a WPC with individuals who were within the zone of trained participants but not yet members of any peace committee in Ward 8 of Seke district. Accordingly, about six would-be peace committee participants were purposively selected. To ensure that a total of 15 members were achieved, we asked some participants to provide names of other would-be peace committee members. A total of seven participants were selected using the snow-ball sampling technique. By selecting these trained participants, the district focal person and I were building on the fact that these trained participants were people who already had some knowledge and understanding about peacebuilding but were not yet members of any peace committee. Since the district focal person and I were also would-be peace committee members we added up to 15 WPC members (henceforth, referred to as the PAG). All peace committee members became partners in the current research.

1.9 Study sample

Brink (2010, p.124) defines sampling as “the researcher’s process of selecting the sample from the population in order to obtain information regarding a phenomenon.” The selection process requires a technique that is compatible with the research design. The non-probability purposive technique was considered the most suitable for the current study because it offered the researcher an opportunity to select participants that he regarded as knowledgeable about the area of study. This view is supported by Daniel (2012, p.87) who argued that purposive technique enables researchers to select participants who fit within the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

He notes that inclusion criteria relate to the main characteristics of the targeted population. The characteristics used to select participants in the current study include:

1. would-be participants were only those that have been trained by ECLF;
2. would-be participants were residents in Ward 8;
3. would-be participants were Shona natives who are either Zezuru; Karanga; Manyika; Ndau or Kore-kore;
4. would-be participants were those representing different sectors in Ward 8;

Criteria 1 and 2 were meant to qualify those participants selected for the WPC. Criterion 3 was designed to cater for any other Shona participants even those who do not reside in Ward 8 of Seke district while criterion 4 was specific for those participants' residents specifically in Ward 8 of Seke district. Those who did not participate in the current study were non-Shona natives. Since the aim of the current study was to set up a WPC in Ward 8, I considered it appropriate to select participants that had undergone the CPMRT sensitization workshop who had close contact with the district focal person.

After appointment of would-be members into the WPC, the district focal person who was now the chairperson of this committee introduced me as the secretary and researcher and we agreed that members of the WPC were to be both partners and key informants. Thus the study sample for the current study comprised of:

- 14 members of the WPC in Ward 8 and the researcher added the total to 15;
- 16 VPC members sampled from Chikambi, Chanakira and Marimbi villages;
- Six in-depth individual interviews involving ward and VPC members in Ward 8 and one stakeholder who works for a local civic organization, Shamwari yemwanasikana;
- Seven individuals who provided narratives on their experiences of informal peace committees outside Seke district.

Thus, the sample for this study involved a total of 42 individual adults. In terms of gender characteristics, there were 21 women and 21 men who participated in the current study.

1.10 Methodology

The first critical step involved in the collection of data was the identification of the district focal person whom I knew was going to link me up to a pool of trained participants in Ward 8. The identification process began on 30 September 2014, when I met with him and presented the idea that I wanted to partner with him in the process of setting up of a WPC. In order to map the way forward, we consulted with the provincial focal person after which this committee was put in place on 7 November 2014. The processes involving planning, setting up of a WPC until evaluation stage, data was collected using the following instruments:

- *Field observations:* This method captured the group dynamics involving gender, power relations and decision making processes between 7 November 2014 and 22 July 2015 during monthly meetings, self-evaluation among other activities;

- *Stakeholder focus group discussions:* This instrument captured information regarding projects that individual peace committee members have embarked on, their skills and knowledge on conflict resolution processes and the various associations that they belong to in their villages.
- *In-depth individual interviews:* This method captured data relating to processes involved in setting up informal peace committees, and how individual participants viewed the concept of peace, peace committee and peacebuilding;
- *Narratives.* This technique captured the varied experiences of stakeholders with informal peace committees in terms of procedures and contributions to peacebuilding. Participants in this category were sampled in order to address objective number 3.

Although these data collection methods were employed in the current study, they were, however, not implemented in a linear process at the same time, although the process was not done haphazardly. It was a planned process that was under the control of PAG from start to finish.

1.11 Data collection procedures

Data collection commenced when planning started on 30 September to 6 November 2014. After the WPC was put in place in November, several meetings were convened as from 7 November to 27 December 2014 on a weekly basis. Participant observation was on-going during these different stages. Although monthly peace committee meetings were successive in that they were held at the end of every month, however, there were several occasions when the secretary was asked to conduct further investigation especially during the period when the PAG was preparing to come up with a blueprint on the concept of peacebuilding, self-evaluation and during village sensitization tours. For example, prior to the initial self-evaluation process, the PAG tasked the secretary to suggest possible questions for self-evaluation on 19 December 2014 and they were reviewed on 5 and 14 January respectively. Following this, I did not come up with possible questions exclusively; I consulted with the deputy and chairperson of the peace committee separately in order to identify themes for evaluation. The analysis of results of self-evaluation took place at a time when interactions with other peace committees in Wedza and Marondera districts had already taken place and by 30 January 2015, a number of perspectives on the concept of peacebuilding and the functions of peace committees were already circulating in our minds and general discussions. For example, the Wedza peace committee get-together involving seven different WPCs on 17 January was held a day after we had carried out the self-evaluation but it was before the analysis of self-evaluation results which took place on 30 January 2015. The inter-WPC interactions led to a conceptual shift in terms of how peacebuilding was to be understood in Ward 8.

The PAG's self-evaluation, a focus group discussion, took place on 16 January 2015 and lasted for 2 hours 30 minutes. In addition, results were discussed on 30 January 2015 with subsequent reconvening of the PAG group discussion to come up with a blueprint of the concept of peacebuilding. These PAG group discussions were "oriented towards eliciting data to expand the depth/address gaps in the emerging analysis" (Morse *et al.*, 2002, p.16). In addition, narratives were solicited from seven purposively selected informants with first-hand experience of peace committees in Harare, Wedza, Marondera and Mutare district in Zimbabwe. Apart from that, in-depth individual interviews were conducted at intervals between November 2014 and February 2015 and results were presented to the PAG on 4 March 2015 for analysis. Following reflections on village tours which lead to the establishment of five VPCs, the PAG resolved that a team comprising of the secretary [the researcher], chairperson and three women were to conduct a project and skills inventory from the sampled three VPCs. Results from projects and skills inventory were presented and analysed by the PAG at a meeting on 31 March 2015.

In principle, analysis by the PAG was on-going and in some sense these analyses and discussions informed the next discussion and ultimately the conduct of activities. While all these dynamics contributed significantly to the availability of data for the current study, a substantial amount of data was collected through our monthly meetings and the subsequent evaluations that generated a peacebuilding and *Mukando* constitutions (see Appendix 11 and Appendix 13 respectively). The details of preliminary evaluation of the WPC are in Chapter nine. This study makes a contribution in the area of informal peace committees in that little is on record on informal peace committee constitutions in academic fora.

1.12 Validity and reliability

In conventional research, confidence in the quality of results is a critical component and the criteria for quality of results are credibility and dependability conventionally known as validity and reliability (Golafshani, 2003, p.601). Roberts and Priest (2010, p.167) defines validity as "the extent to which the research is plausible, credible, trustworthy and defensible." To ensure credibility on the collection of data process an audio voice recorder was employed after assuring informants and participants that the information collected was to be used for the purposes intended.

When the consent of participants and informants was established, recording of data through the audio voice recorder was alternated with writing notes especially noting non-verbal cues that could not be captured by the voice recorder. After data collection, I transcribed data while it was still fresh in the mind to ensure that the context against which the conversation and discussion occurred was not lost along the way. The advantage of fresh memory helped me to keep the discussion alive in the mind and this was helpful especially when alternated with the voice recorder as I was able to link words with what I saw

during peace committee meetings and events that I observed, thus enhancing credibility and trustworthiness on the findings.

Roberts and Priest (2010, p.167) define reliability as “the extent to which the results of a study are dependable and repeatable in different circumstances with a different researcher.” What is clear is that reliability is concerned with the outcome of the research. Although it is undeniably true that different researchers are not likely to come up with similar results, the bottom line is that the technical accuracy in terms of how data was recorded should be above board. In the current study, following the collection of data I took the pains to transcribe data using the indigenous language in order to get the gist of it all, after which I engaged a translator who provided translation services on the data from Shona into English. The translator is a native Shona but an English Language teacher at the secondary school level. He is the editor-in-chief of the Southern Peace Review Journal, a peer reviewed journal and has a Master of Arts in English. On the basis of these merits I felt inadequate to translate data from Shona to English and to ensure accuracy of data I engaged him to provide translation services on the data that I collected using indigenous language during the period of my fieldwork in Ward 8 of Seke district. The *Mukando* scheme and peacebuilding constitutions went through a similar translation process.

Muhammad *et al.* (2008, p.1) recommended the use of multiple data collection methods to investigate a single phenomenon as one of the strategies that secures confidence and the quality of results, arguing that this is particularly possible for qualitative research which assumes that there are multiple realities. As a result, the use of a number of data collection methods serve to validate the findings. In similar thought, Golafshani (2003, p.603) points out that while triangulation of data collection methods strengthens the research process, it can help to improve the quality of the results by involving several research assistants in the analysis of results. Thus, Golafshani (2003, p.604) argues for the use of multiple data collection methods and co-researcher analysis process as strategies that enhance but also improve the quality of findings.

Morse *et al* (2002, p.10) pointed out that in qualitative research where the process is back and forth, there are verification strategies that help to increase validity and reliability of results. From their perspective, these verification strategies include coherence between research questions and the methods of data collection; a representative sample consisting of participants with knowledge of the subject matter; concurrent data collection and analysis and reconfirmations of previous data with new ones. Further, they noted that a combination of these verification strategies helps to build confidence in the results and thus ensure quality. This is true of PAR in which participants and the researcher form a partnership and the

methods for collecting data are contextualized; given that in PAR co-researchers create knowledge in order to address challenges affecting their lives. That being the case, the study sample was comprised of participants who were knowledgeable about their problems, with the objective that their knowledge would address their own problems. Since the methodology was participatory, data collection and analysis were not considered as separate entities and thus, the reconfirmations of previous ideas with new ideas was a major characteristic feature because of the nature of the process. In the process leading to the setting up of a WPC, ideas that emerged from my initial discussions with the district focal person on 30 September 2014, and 10 and 15 October 2014, were reconfirmed on 17 October during our discussions with the provincial focal person and in subsequent discussions. These emerging discussions gave rise to new ideas on other discussions that followed on the 21st, 30th and 31st October, 4th, 5th and 6 November 2014. Simply put, discussions, reflections and analysis that we made as co-researchers were the determining factors for the recruitment of would-be peace committee members in Ward 8. WPC was put in place on 7 November 2014.

Muhammad *et al.* (2008, p.43) added other verification strategies to the list. They are: member checking; verbatim accounts; research partners; use of voice recorders; participant observation; and reconvening of interviews and focus groups. Thus, owing to the PAR cycles discussed above, this study employed a combination of these verification strategies to secure confidence and credibility of the results.

When the PAG conducted a self-evaluation on 16 January 2015 and the subsequent analysis of data on 30 January 2015, this represented triangulated analysis, thus enhancing confidence in the quality of results. In addition, since I was appointed secretary of the WPC, during the course of every meeting when I asked participants informally to clarify some points for discussion to capture the correct information those aspects helped to confirm trustworthiness of the results. Apart from that, in almost every formal WPC meeting, the secretary read all the minutes of previous meetings and the provision for correction of minutes was meant to confirm confidence in the quality of results. The process of passing previous minutes as a correct record by the quorum was in fact a verification process that secured confidence in the results.

Overall, the continual collaborative process involving the researcher and the district focal person, the WPC and VPCs was verified by the analysis of data at various stages of the PAR cycle. Peace committee members verified data collected through formal meetings; stakeholder interviews, stakeholder narratives and stakeholder focus group discussions verified participant observations.

1.13 Organization of the study

This study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Overview of the study; provides an overview of the entire study. It also presented the conflict landscape in Zimbabwe, statement of the problem and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2: The Historical context of infrastructures for peace in Zimbabwe; examined peace challenges experienced from as far back as the pre-colonial era, colonial and post –colonial Zimbabwe. The problem of violence, polarization and racial conflict has not taken place in a vacuum and for that reason, the historical context was described to set the stage for the development of I4P in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3: Literature review; examines the concept of communities in transition and concludes that modern communities are susceptible to state authority and influence and in worst scenarios to violent political systems that render them powerless. Drawing from the four case studies taken from across the globe, this chapter illustrated how other communities have transited from violence to peace. Further, it reviewed the means by which peace can be built. In addition, the chapter reviewed the emerging trends for peacebuilding mechanisms at local community levels and these include spot/football events, entrepreneurial activities and informal LPCs. The chapter concludes with an examination of the comparative advantages of informal peace committees over formal peace committees and the possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 4: Theoretical framework; discussed the integration of peacebuilding, indigenous knowledge systems and asset-based theories. These theories were employed as analytical lens for the WPC which was put in place in Ward 8 of Seke district in 2014, with a view to establish the contributions of informal peace committees to peacebuilding.

Chapter 5: Research design and methodology; reviewed the theory and practice of PAR design and described how the cycles of PAR were applied in Seke district before and after a WPC was established in Ward 8. The chapter concludes with an examination of research instruments that were employed in the current study.

Chapter 6: Procedures for setting up ward and VPCs; describes the steps taken by a small advisory team of 14 members that I have worked with as from September 2014 to July 2015. These steps resulted in the setting up of a WPC and five VPCs and the subsequent evaluation.

Chapter 7: Data; contains results that emerged from in-depth interviews, participant observations, analysis by the PAG and narratives of lived experiences of informal peace committees by individuals from four selected districts in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 8: Findings; discussed the major themes around the concept of peace, peacebuilding and peace committees as direct responses by local communities to addressing peace challenges affecting their well-being.

Chapter 9: Evaluation and analysis; presents results of the preliminary evaluation of the WPC initiative in Ward 8 of Seke district. The WPC comprised of 15 members inclusive of the researcher and the results presented covered the period from 30 September 2014 to 22 July 2015.

Chapter 10: Conclusions and recommendations; reviewed the experiences of the researcher over a period of four years and the experiences of working with a small advisory team from the design, implementation and evaluation of the WPC initiative in Ward 8 of Seke district. The study concludes with recommendations for the institutionalization of informal peace committees in institutions of higher education in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE IN ZIMBABWE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is not a rigorous historical account but provides an overview of flashpoints in the history of Zimbabwe dating from the pre-colonial era to the 2000s. In doing so, the chapter attempts to highlight the arrival of the Shona in the country now called Zimbabwe, Ndebele-Shona relations in order to bring to light some of the misconceptions that some people had about these major ethnic grouping. It also highlights the Shona customary court system as a mechanism that the majority ethnic groupings in Zimbabwe have employed in order to cope with conflict in pre-colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. It also highlights some historical events surrounding Shona customary court system from the colonial era to the post independence era. It is hoped that an overview of some of the events surrounding Shona customary courts, will help to provide a backdrop for the emergence of informal LPCs and how these two institutions have influenced each other. The Chapter also illustrates how previous epochs in the history of Zimbabwe have left imprints of violence that manifested in the new political community, in particular, in the 2000s. The Chapter concludes by taking a look at the development of I4P, in particular reconciliatory policy framework, the ONHRI and the recent NPRC of 2013, which the Zimbabwean government has taken on-board in a bid to address peace challenges since independence in 1980. Although this Chapter adopted a backward looking approach, it also is forward looking in terms of how informal peace committees can be transformed into mainstream peacebuilding in modern Zimbabwe.

2.2 Shona people of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is located in southern Africa between Zambia, South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique (Steward, Klugman and Helmsing, 1994). According to the 2012 census, Zimbabwe has a population of about 13,061,239 people of which 6,780,700 are females while 6,280,539 are males (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2013, p.2). The population is made up of Chewa; Chibarwe; English; Kalanga; Khoisan; Nambya; Ndau; Ndebele; Shangani; Shona; Sotho; Tonga; Tswana; Venda and Xhosa ethnic groups. Ncube (2014, p.192) observed that: “Zimbabwe’s citizens are commonly distinguished in ethnic terms by linguistic tradition.” Thus, people are identified on the basis of their language. For instance, Ndebele people speak Ndebele language and Shona people speak Shona language. This study is focused on Shona people.

Shona people constitute about 80 per cent of the population while Ndebele people comprise of 16 per cent and other ethnic groups constitute 4 per cent (Ncube, 2014, p.193). Shona is made up of five ethnic groups namely the Zezuru, Manyika, Ndau, Kore-Kore, and Karanga people. The Zezuru occupies modern Harare and Mashonaland areas; Manyika and Ndau are concentrated in the eastern part around the city of Mutare that borders Mozambique. Kore-kore people are centralized in mount Darwin and surrounding areas that borders with Zambia. The Karanga people are concentrated in modern Masvingo that borders with South Africa (Bourdillon, 1987, p.5; Gombe, 2006, p.17; Kabweza, 2002, p.7; Magwa, 2004, p.1). Figure 1 below shows the sub-divisions of the area.

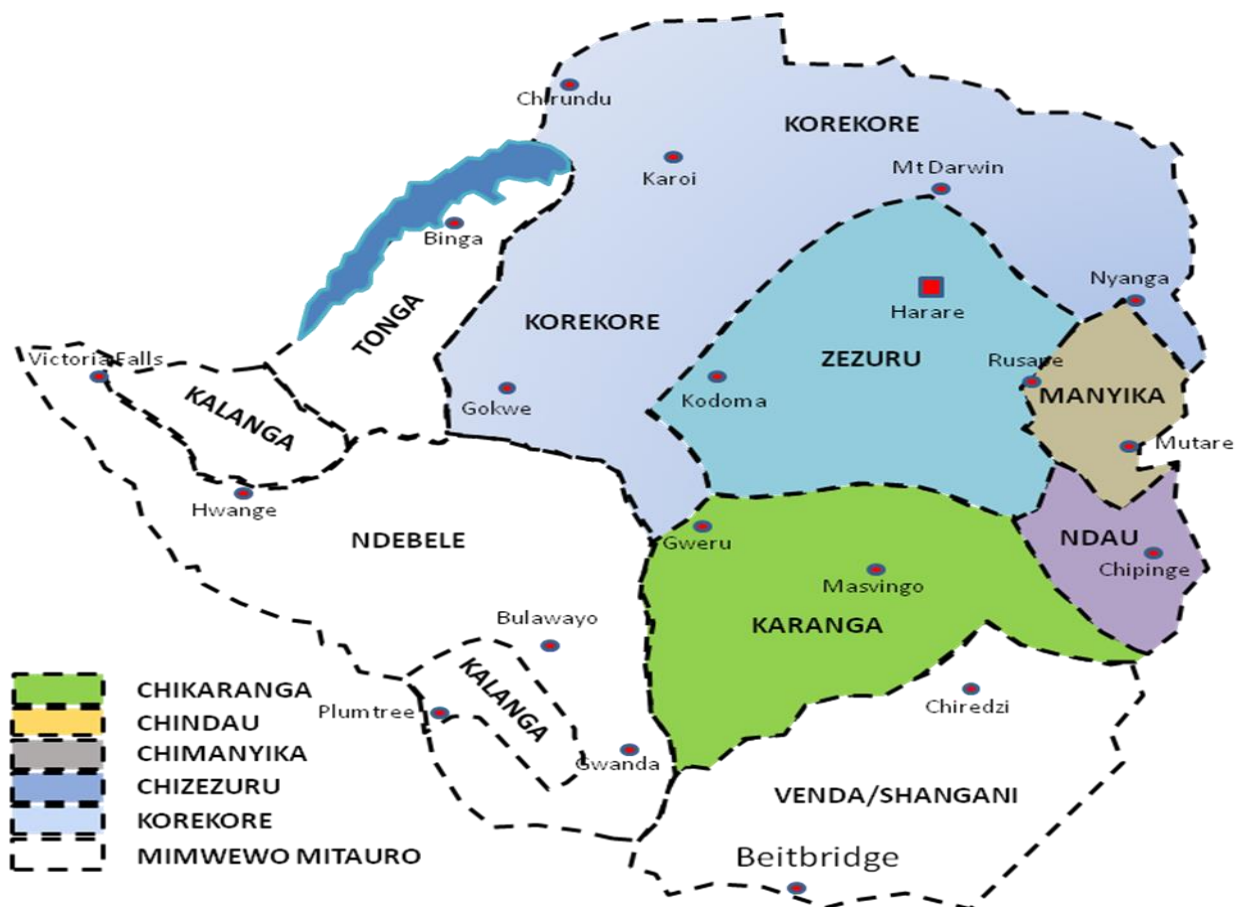


Figure 1: Geographical distribution of Shona people

Source: Adapted from Magwa (2004, p.ix)

2.2.1 Pre-colonial Shona

The history of Zimbabwe is classified into four major epochs namely, pre-colonial era, colonial era, liberation war and post-independence. Before the coming of European settlers in 1890, Shona people

were already occupying this area now called Zimbabwe from around 1000 Anno Domini (AD) (Aschwandien, 1989, p.278). Maruta and Mpofu (2004) state that when Shona people arrived, they found the San people already there but displaced them. The San people lived in caves and survived on hunter-gathering.

In contrast, Shona people built shelters; they were agriculturalist and pastoralists and subsequently established a number of kingdoms. The first kingdom established in the 12th century was the Great Zimbabwe from which the name Zimbabwe was derived. The last kingdom, which endured until about 1800s, was the Rozvi kingdom (Kabweza, 2002, pp.7-8; Maruta and Mpofu (2004, pp.58-60) following the arrival of the Nguni on the scene. These kingdoms were not without conflicts. Tshuma (2010) and Kabweza (2002, pp.103-105) contend that raids, conquests, subjugation, killings, witchcraft accusations and boundary disputes were commonplace. These conflicts put into context the role played by customary courts in coping with conflict in pre-colonial era.

2.2.2 Pre-colonial Shona customary courts

It is not clear when or how Shona *matare emhosva* in the country now called Zimbabwe began, but it is known that they existed in the pre-colonial era, colonial and post-colonial eras. *Matare emhosva* as directly observed by Bourdillon (1987, pp.27-31); Kabweza (2002, pp.98, 203-105); Gombe (2006, pp.51-58) pre-dates colonial times where there were structural courts which comprised of a household court, village court, ward court and the chief's court. The household court stood at the base of the pyramidal structure with the chief's court at the apex. The household court sheds light on how conflicts at the household level were handled. The village and ward headman's courts shed light on how conflicts presided over by the headmen were resolved and the chief's court sheds light on how conflicts considered of criminal nature were resolved (Kabweza, 2002, pp.103-105; Gombe, 2006, pp.51-56).

2.2.3 Shona-Ndebele relations

As mentioned above, before the coming of Europeans in 1890, the Ndebele people under Mzilikazi came into the scene and settled in the western part of the country now called Bulawayo. How these two ethnic groups interacted has been a subject of debate in academic discourses (Ncube, 2014, p.193). However, while this study does not promise to offer a conclusive position in this matter, it has only highlighted that Shona-Ndebele relations cannot be overlooked when discussing possibilities of addressing peace challenges bedevilling modern Shona because Ndebele people share the same space with Shona people, thus, an understanding of their interactions is an important variable for peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

As previously mentioned, the relations between Shona and Ndebele have been a subject of debate by a number of authorities. For example, Ncube suggests that “Shona-Ndebele relations have never been smooth, a situation evident even in the pre-colonial times” (2014, p.193). There are two contradictory schools of thought that attempt to explain Shona-Ndebele interactions in pre-colonial era. The first popularly held view says that Ndebele people were ruthless against Shona, they confiscated their properties, raided cattle, and young men were taken captive, young girls and wives taken away (Maruta and Mpofu, 2004, p.61). Those who subscribe to this school of thought, argue that: “in keeping with the times, Mzilikazi is said to have forcefully assumed control over the already existing Shona people in the process of establishing the Ndebele nation” (Moyo, 2013, p.21). According to this view, raids, conquests and subjugation in the history of pre-colonial Shona was a characteristic feature of the relations between the two major ethnic groupings until the 1890s when European settlers came into the scene. This view has degenerated into a number of perceptions involving both Shona and Ndebele people.

At four different workshops conducted by ECLF in local communities, participants defined perception in two strands. In the first place, perception was described as a selective interpretation of events by individuals and groups. Secondly, it was described as an observation which may not carry the absolute truth. Taken together, workshop participants came to understand perception as assumptions that can lead to uninformed action, resulting in misguided validation. It also came out from the workshops that perceptions are formed where people uphold certain viewpoints or dehumanize other people. In that workshop, the phrase ‘dehumanize’ was taken to mean giving a name to someone as less human, this makes the name-giver feel comfortable to scold, shame or even to kill in the worst scenarios. In that light, relations between Shona and Ndebele have been characterized by perceptions such as that the Ndebele people are prone to violence (Maruta and Mpofu, 2004, p.60). On the basis of these perceptions, Shona always refer to Ndebele people as “*madzviti*” (ruthless raiders), even after a period of over one hundred years, Shona people still seem to have hard feelings against the Ndebele. As a result of these perceptions, some Shona people have developed stereotypes which portray Ndebele as backward people whose ambitions are superficial, as lazy and people who like drinking alcohol (Moyo, 2013, p.21).

On the other hand, Ndebele people perceive themselves as a marginalized and an insecure minority group in Zimbabwe. The perception is that policies and their implementation have disproportionately favoured Shona people as public service workers, private sector employment, and tertiary education to ownership of businesses; there is a disproportionate representation of non-Ndebele people (Moyo, 2013, p.21). These perceptions have since been augmented and intensified by historical events such as ZANU PF remaining predominantly Shona while ZAPU has remained Ndebele dominated. That being the case, since no efforts

have been made up to this point to clarify these perceptions by either side, these perceptions can complicate cordial relations between Shona and Ndebele if they remain unclarified. On the basis of this school of thought, the understanding that perception is an observation which may not carry the absolute truth seems to hold water using the above example to illustrate the point.

The second popular but contradictory view, says Ndebele people were “just a people trying to survive and perpetuate their own kind” (Maruta and Mpofu, 2004, p.61-2). This view was captured by Moyo when he said:

A more accurate picture of the 19th century Ndebele-Shona relations is a complex one where trade, alliances, cross-cultural exchanges all interchanged with wars. Given this scenario, it would be a gross distortion to present Ndebele-Shona relations as frosty for that was only one facet to a multi-dimensional story. Finally, it ought to be remembered that the Shona consisted of many groups that were independent of each other hence it frequently happened that one group enjoyed a cordial relationship while another was at war with the Ndebele (Moyo, undated, p.2).

Although Moyo sounds apologetic about these dynamics, there is no denial that in his proposition, he acknowledges these contradictory views but continues to argue that Ndebele-Shona relations were punctuated by conflicts, co-existence and in some cases hostilities (ibid, p.2).

Ncube (2014, p.193) states that colonialism exacerbated ethnic tensions when Rhodesia was divided along ethnic and racial lines. He goes further to argue that the natives were classified as Mashona and Matabele. At independence, the new government inherited these ethnic overtones, exacerbated by historical events such as the Matabeleland and Midlands conflict - “the Matabeleland conflict thus increased ethnic divisions...between the Ndebele and Shona” (Ncube, 2014, p.194). In contemporary Zimbabwe, rivalry between Ndebele and Shona continues to rear its ugly head in sports. A study by Ncube (2014, p.206) showed that matches between two ethnic-based football teams – Dynamos - which is Shona based and Highlanders - which is Ndebele based “provide a platform for historical ethnic rivalry to manifest.” Owing to the unending debates on Shona and Ndebele relations, this study argues that rivalries expressed through sport and other platforms are based on “real and perceived historical and contemporary ethnic and regional enmities ...” (Ncube, 2014, p.200). As mentioned above, if perceptions are not checked they may lead to certain assumptions that degenerate into misguided validation thereby necessitating antagonistic interactions.

In light of the above discussions, the nature of relations between modern Shona and Ndebele cannot be accorded the status of cordial harmony, peaceful co-existence and tolerance, but can be said to be

characterized by tension, suspicion and animosity. Overall, the chief culprit is perceptions between these two major ethnic groups. Although this state of affairs is outside the parameters of this study, it is food for thought for peacebuilding in modern Zimbabwe.

2.3 Colonialism and its impact on Shona customary courts

In its basic form, colonialism was based on the assumption that non-European ethnic groups were primordial, exotic, underprivileged, dependent and barbaric while Europeans were considered as cultured, superior, well-off, self-sufficient, full-grown and saintly (Tormey, 2006, p.247). This perception created the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy in host village communities. For instance, as Bullock (1950, p.202) puts it, this Europeanized hegemony legitimized the humiliation and injustice against the Shona institutions, in this case *matare emhosva*. Murith (2006, p.14) makes the point that:

Colonialism did not only destroy the basis upon which Africans could define themselves, but where it could, it also co-opted the indigenous structures and mechanisms of governance and dispute resolution to serve the interests of the colonial administration. Indigenous traditions with regard to governing and resolving disputes in African societies were therefore corrupted by the centralized power of colonialism.

Typically, in Zimbabwe, the then Rhodesia, the colonial government established an institution called *Native Affairs Department* (NAD) throughout the country. NAD was designed to represent the interests of black people from household to village level (Murray, 1970, p.9). While a number of institutions were affected by colonialism, this study is more interested with developments surrounding Shona customary courts.

Development since the 1890s

Typically, ever since the institutionalization of NAD, Shona traditional leaders no longer exercised jurisdiction over the settlement and resolution of conflict as they did before the 1890s (Bullock, 1913, p.58; 1927, p.382; Palley, 1966, p.494). The coming of Europeans in the country called Zimbabwe resulted in the traditional system being outdone by the Roman-Dutch Law. Holleman (1969, p.339) made similar points:

With the establishment of white colonial power... indigenous tribal leadership was largely superseded by a system of government in which not the tribal chieftains but European commissioners became the supreme local authorities.

As a result of this development, Shona customary courts were enforced by native district commissioners courts as provided by the *Southern Rhodesia Order in Council*, 1898 (articles 50 & 51) and the *Southern*

Rhodesia Native Regulations Proclamations 1910 (section 14). This means chiefs lost the right to settle disputes considered as criminal in Shona conception, as criminal cases were now under the jurisdiction of European criminal law (Holleman, 1969, p.17).

Subsequently, in 1934, chiefs and headmen were allowed to preside over what were considered minor disputes according to the *Native Law and Courts Acts* (no. 33 of 1937). Apart from that, the *African Law and Tribal Courts Act* (no. 24 of 1969, section 9 & 12) promulgated in 1969, gave chiefs the powers to preside over offences committed in Tribal Trust Lands. Under this Act, chiefs and headmen made use of customary and criminal law as frameworks for resolving disputes (Bourdillon, 1987, p.139). The judicial powers of the chief's court to dissolve marriages were prohibited by the *Native Law and Courts Act* (section 6(2)).

As if that was not enough, the use of ordeals to ascertain the offender became a criminal offence (Chavhunduka, 1986, p.48). During this colonial era, Shona civil and criminal code was outdone by the European civil and criminal code. Bullock (1913) singled out cases that were purely civil among the Shona that fell under the criminal category according to European criminal code. These include, but were not limited to murder, rape, witchcraft, perjury, theft and many more offences (Bullock, 1913, pp.56-92; 1927, pp.300-310). A comparison of Shona and European civil and criminal codes is beyond the scope of this study but its influence can be seen today. Due to this dichotomous judicial system that existed in the then Rhodesia, matters considered civil cases became the domain of customary courts while criminal cases became a domain of criminal courts.

Developments since independence in 1980

The coming of independence resulted in the replacement of the *African Law and Tribal Courts Act* (no. 24 of 1969) with the *Customary Law and Primary Courts Act* (no. 6 of 1981). Under this new Act, the chiefs' courts were replaced by elected presiding officers who received government training. Simply put, chiefs and headmen lost official judicial powers to preside over conflicts under the *Customary Law and Primary Courts Act* (no. 6 of 1981) in independent Zimbabwe. However, it was not long before the chiefs and headmen's judicial powers were restored by the *Customary Law and Local Courts Act* (no. 20 of 1990) (Bennett, 2004 [n 20] p.138). In addition, the *Customary Law and Local Courts Act* (Cap 7:05 of 1996) section 11 provides that headmen or any other person appointed by the Minister of justice shall preside over village courts while the chief or any other person appointed shall preside over community courts. As mentioned above, the dual system in which civil matters became the domain of the chief and

headman's courts while criminal matters were handled by modern criminal courts persisted in post-independence Zimbabwe.

Consequently, due to the dichotomous judicial system, Shona people in both urban and rural centres have options to choose between civil and criminal courts. There are a number of reasons for these options. In the first place, the majority of urban dwellers appear to have developed confidence in the country's legal system because criminal courts of law decide cases on the basis of facts and the law. From a peace studies point of view, the civil legal process, the magistrate's court in particular, also, has the capacity to build peace in that if the parties have their facts right even if the dispute involves the weak and the powerful, ideally, the outcome can put the dispute to rest. In essence, the magistrate's court adjudicates disputes but there are cases where the magistrate's court seeks a compromise solution such as an out of court settlement. In that sense, once erstwhile enemies' stops fighting, that development falls within the category of peacebuilding. In the second place, some people take their cases to civil courts of law because it has now become a norm. Other people find themselves in the courts of law because they may have been arrested by police officers after committing a civil or criminal offence.

A third and final reason is that other people take their cases to civil or criminal courts of law because one can engage a lawyer as well as securing protection of the law, something which is not feasible under customary courts (*Customary Law and Local Courts Act* (Cap 7:05) section 20 (2)). Others who decide to take their cases to criminal courts of law may have sought recourse through local customary courts but may decide to take the case to a civil or criminal court of law. Thus, disputes which traditionally were a domain of a customary court are now referred to civil or criminal courts of law. Taking a dispute to the magistrate's court occurs usually when the aggrieved party feels that a fair trial has not been administered or when there is no agreement between disputants at a customary court.

By and large, when a decision to take a dispute to the magistrate's court has been made, the plaintiff and his relatives accompany each other. In such disputes what the plaintiff will be longing for is to win the case against his/her opponent. If the magistrate's court successfully relates all the facts and decides on the basis of the law resulting in agreement between erstwhile enemies not fighting, one can safely say a contribution to peacebuilding has been made. Nevertheless, Matavire (2012, p.221) observed that: "magistrates courts are far from rural areas and as a result chiefs end up trying cases which are beyond their jurisdiction." According to government law, the chief's court is not allowed to preside over a case that is above US\$500.00 (ibid).

Although there are nearly 35 years of post-independence in Zimbabwe, the dual legal system is still a force to be reckoned with. Accordingly, *matare emhosva* as peacebuilding forums are working alongside the Roman Dutch law court system in modern Zimbabwe. Within this framework, informal peace committees are an emerging institution originally formed with the support of civic organizations such as Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust (ZIMCET) since 2002, the not distant past (Church and Civil Society Forum (CCSF), 2014, p.23). In local communities, peace committees are not set up to replace *matare emhosva* but they complement each other. Thus, the civil/criminal courts of law, *matare emhosva* and peace committees are relevant in terms of everyday life in modern Zimbabwe and they reflect the different phases of transitions experienced by communities in Zimbabwe.

This study interrogated informal peace committees, their contributions to peacebuilding and explored possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The *matare emhosva* have been operational since the pre- and post-colonial eras, the period from the 1980s to the 2000s and these same courts have sometimes operated under volatile political environments and in the worst scenarios under violent conditions.

Developments between 1980 and the 1990s

With the advent of independence in 1980, much of traditional peaceable social norms and values seem to have gradually lost significance without equivalent substitution, especially in the second decade. Since independence, elections have become one of the popular factors of transition of social relationships, not only in Zimbabwe, but also across the globe (Bamfo, 2010, p.108). Due to changing cultural, socio-economic and political contexts that infiltrated modern communities, a number of people have suffered violence. Studies by Redress and Amani Trust (2005, p.5) showed that the dominant cultural group, people in urban communities were drawn into violent behaviour resulting from mass demonstrations in 1995, food riots between 1997, 1998, organized stay-always in 2001 and 2003, which resulted in the loss of lives and properties. Although violence in Zimbabwe is often associated with a colonial legacy (Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.5), violence in the 1990s was related to the post-independent environment such as economic decline, employee retrenchments and escalating prices of basic commodities and unemployment (Maclean, 2002, p.521).

Developments between 2000 and 2002

As mentioned above, there is no denial that violence in the subsequent elections in 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 resembled some violent colonial tactics. For instance, during the colonial era in Rhodesia, violence was used as a tool to silence dissenting voices particularly black nationalists between 1960s and 1970s

(SPT, 2004, p.8; Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and SPT, 2006, p.9; State in Transition Observation (SITO), 2008, p.3). Ironically, from around 2000 onwards, it appears that violence was used as a political tool to silence dissenting voices and to maintain political power by ruling elites (SITO, 2008, p.3). A report on the election violence of 2008 by SPT (2008b, p.39) showed that: "much of the violence has been community based and has set neighbour upon neighbour and even family members against one another." Election violence relates to random and pre-arranged behaviours (such as assault, kidnapping, murder and torture) aimed at influencing the outcome of an election (Fischer, 2002, p.3). This is typical of a disrupted community as validated by Reeler (2008:37) that: "cases of torture were found in nearly every district of Zimbabwe." The scenario is quite reflective of common trends that are often witnessed in communities that experience violence. A review of data from several sources points to the scale of the problem, (which include but are not limited to SPT, ZHRNF, ZESN), which is indicative of changes in social relationships. These sources provide evidence that communities in Zimbabwe have experienced unprecedented levels of violence resulting from electoral conflict in the 2000s.

With the coming of the new political community in the year 2000, youth have been on the forefront of modern Zimbabwean politics. The recruitment of young people, particularly from rural villages in the run-up to elections, has been noted by scholars such as Alexander and Tendi (2008, p.11) as a pattern that has prevailed since the 2002 elections. Reeler (2003, p.8) argues that the use of young people in 2002 has remarkable similarities to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Rwanda in that most rural unemployed youth were targets for recruitment. In Zimbabwe, only the unemployed youth were recruited into the national youth service. However, the difference was that in the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone: "recruitments of youth occurred within the context of a civil war involving massive disruption and destruction of communities: children and young men were dragged in by force of circumstances - although their motive for joining armed groups varied" (Reeler, 2003, p.20). In Rwanda, for instance, youth were recruited along ethnic lines under a process that was underpinned by propaganda campaigns. In contrast to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Rwanda, Zimbabwe had no substantial prospects for a civil war but youth recruitment was based on two or more factors: it was induced by incentives such as money and food. Community pressure was another factor that was also compounded by compulsion by party loyalists (Reeler, 2003, p.18, 20).

The social action model can explain the involvement of the youth in perpetrating violence in both urban and rural communities. This model is premised on the idea that when an individual person (of lower status) perceives another (of higher status) performing an action which s/he thinks is beneficial s/he is likely to imitate it - this imitated behaviour is likely to be induced to other individuals (Garcia, 2001, p.55). Reeler (2003, p.15) advises that: "there was a strong relationship between youth militias and war

veterans in the run-up to elections in the 2000s.” He goes on to argue that: “these youth were trained by security forces and war veterans” (p.6). Thus, vindicating the basic premise of the social action model that “an individual with a higher value of status will have a higher probability to induce his/her behaviour to others. Individuals with a low value of status will have a lower probability of imitating other individuals” (Garcia, 2001, p.57). If the above argument is anything to go by, it cannot be ruled out that the involvement of war veterans and security forces in the training and supervision of national youth service programmes could potentially have resulted in the youth imitating the behaviour of war veterans and security forces.

Finally, the involvement of youth as perpetrators of violence in communities is an interesting deviation from the traditional Shona social norms and values when young people, who are supposed to respect their elders, turned out to become persecutors and murderers of their own elderly people. The sudden turn of youth against their elders and parents did not occur in a more traditional Shona community because elders had the moral right to impose sanctions against any act (such as scolding, beating or persecuting elderly people) perceived as anti-social. This is a noticeable change in attitudes, values and interpersonal relationships for some, as Chimuka (2001, p.7) notes: “by involving themselves in bickering and violence, the Shona do not seem to live by the cherished values and practices of their forefathers.” Therefore, what is critical for modern Shona communities is to be able to address the political dynamics that stifled good relationships between households and communities. The impact of political developments described above reached a peak in one of Zimbabwe’s worst electoral conflict in the 2008 general election. Important dates associated with this election are 29 March and 27 June. Events surrounding these dates help to put into perspective conditions under which local communities were subjected to and question what communities should do to take care of their own peace in Zimbabwe.

The 29 March 2008 harmonized elections

The harmonized elections on 29 March 2008 involved voting for the president, parliamentarians, senators and local councillors. There is extensive documentation that confirms that the environment in the pre-election period and on the voting day was relatively calm compared to 2000 and 2002 (SITO, 2008, p.13; SPT, 2008a, p.11; 2008b, p.6; Reeler, 2008, p.8; ZESN, 2008, p.34; ZHRNF, 2008a, p.2; 2008b, p.4). According to a survey by ZESN (2008, p.38), on voting day, 71 per cent of polling stations went on without any serious logistical hurdles, 26 per cent had minor problems while three per cent experienced major problems such as that some voters were turned away for going to the wrong polling stations and for failing to produce credible voters documents. ZESN (2008, p.34) reported that:

The pre-29 March electoral environment was generally peaceful and calm with some political semblance of political tolerance with youth from various contesting political parties ...freely mingling while traditional no-go areas for opposition political parties were also fairly open to opposition politics.

Nevertheless, a number of concerns such as vote-buying, media manipulation, intimidation, inflammatory and threatening language and violence though at reduced levels were registered (SITO, 2008, p.13, ZESN, 2008, p.35). Another report by ZHRNF (2008b, p.4) showed that the use of bellicose language against the opposition was very prominent between January and April. For example, at one of the rallies, Mugabe pointed out clearly that if he loses an election he would “go to the bush and use guns.” Further, ZHRNF highlighted that some weeks before elections, security chiefs comprising of army, police and prison officers publicly proclaimed that they were not prepared to salute any other aspirant head of state except Mugabe (ZHRNF, 2008b, p.4).

Against these campaign trails and an intolerant environment, a tone for election violence was set in the pre-election period in March resulting in 24 cases of torture, 270 incidences of assault and 287 incidences of political intimidation, victimization and discrimination most of which were allegedly perpetrated by ZANU PF supporters against opposition members (ZHRNF, 2008a, p.3; SPT, 2008a, p.32). Figure 2 summarizes cases of electoral violence which occurred between January and April 2008. A total of 681 cases of violence were experienced during this period. One percent of violent cases were reported in both January and February, while eight percent of violent cases were reported in March. Of the 681 cases of violence, 91 percent (618) were reported in April.

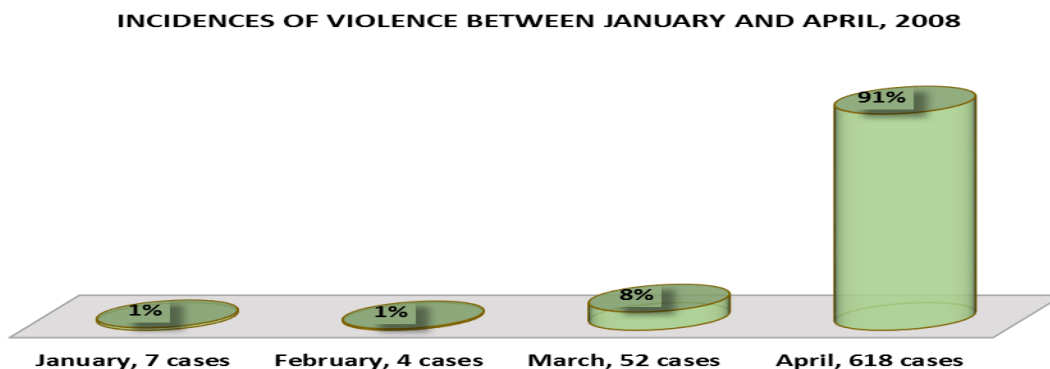


Figure 2: Cases of violence between January and April

Source: Solidarity Peace Trust (2008a, p.32).

The escalation of violence immediately after the voting day can be attributed to a number of factors. As agreed by the political parties, the new electoral law in 2008 required that results be posted at each polling station and the practice created a potential danger as poll results of presidential, parliamentary, senatorial

and local councils were flowing in faster from unofficial sources, while official sources were slow: "... a slow drip of pronouncement from the officials, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and a more rapid outpouring from the MDC and from text messages and the pictures of people's cell phones of results posted at each station" (Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.9). A survey by Fischer (2002, p.10) showed that grouping results by polling stations sparked election violence in East Timor and to circumvent the situation, a mixed voter ballot with other polling stations was devised by the United Nations (UN) supervisory team. In Zimbabwe such a mechanism was not considered a necessity and therefore it was not used.

In an already volatile electoral atmosphere, the delay in releasing the presidential results for five weeks after the polls on 29 March led to suspicion, anxiety, and tension and a tone for an even more volatile post-election environment was set. In the words of Bamfo (2010, p.108): "Zimbabwe was thrown into an uneasy state when ZEC refused to release results of the presidential contest, sparking suspicion and protests." Regional and international voices expressed concern over the delay in releasing presidential results. To that effect, on 12 April, Southern African Development Community (SADC) convened a meeting in Lusaka, Zambia and countries such as Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia criticized the long delay in releasing presidential results (SPT, 2008a, p.16; 2008b, p.9). Finally, on May 2, 2008, five weeks after polling day the result of the presidential election was released: Tsvangirai of MDC obtaining 47,8 per cent, Mugabe of ZANU PF had 43,2 per cent, Makoni, independent won 8,3 per cent and Towungana had 0.6 per cent. The 2008 harmonized election marked a historic victory for the opposition, MDC, which obtained a majority seats of 109 in parliament against 97 of the ruling party, ZANU PF (Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.9; SPT, 2008a, p.6; ZESN, 2008, p.41, 46). There being no outright winner as required by law, which states that a winner must obtain 50 per cent of the vote, a run-off was therefore unavoidable (SPT, 2008a, p.6; ZESN, 2008, p.46; ZHRNF, 2008c, p.2). A run-off involved two top candidates: Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai.

27 June 2008 presidential election run-off

There is already extensive documentation on the run-off election violence that occurred in the run-up to and after the presidential poll of 27 June 2008 in Zimbabwe (ZHRNF, 2008b, p.4; 2008c, p.2; 2008d, p.2; Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.11; SPT, 2008b, p.6; Reeler, 2008, p.8; ZESN, 2008, p.48). Statistics provided by ZHRNF indicate that by April 2008, about 10 people were reportedly killed and hundreds were injured. In the month of May, there were about 435 cases of assault, 58 incidences of retributive torture, 14 cases of murder, 195 cases involving destruction of property and 195 cases of disappearance. In the month of June, there were 281 cases of assault, 277 cases of political intimidation and

victimization, 44 cases of unlawful arrests, 35 cases of torture, 37 abduction cases, 82 cases related to destruction of property and 55 disappearance cases (ZHRNF, 2008b, p.9; 2008c, p.3,4; 2008d, p.2,3,4).

Conversely, ZESN reported that April had 4,359 incidences of violence, which shot up to 6,288 in May. The month of June saw a drastic decline of election violence to 3,735 cases with another relative drop off to 1,123 in July. For the period under review, about 171 death cases, 9,148 cases of assaults and rape cases were reported (ZESN, 2008, p.48).

A report by ZHRNF (2008b, pp.6-7), showed that trends and patterns of the run-off election violence in 2008 were systematic and widespread. In the month of April there were cases of retributive beatings in the villages, widespread in that victims were from all the different 10 provinces across Zimbabwe. Another report by SPT (2008b, p.28) showed that there were “a series of targeted abductions and murders of key opposition activists.” According to ZESN (2008, p.48), some children suffered the trauma of witnessing their parents, brothers, sisters being beaten, houses burnt down, schools closed and turned into base camps for use by militia gangs. Random travelling from urban to rural areas was restricted to the extent that if a person decides to visit his/her rural home one had to be cleared first by the village heads or risk being labelled guilty by association with the opposition (ibid).

As days preceding the run-off were drawing closer, towards the end of May to the turn of the month of June, there was a shift in targets of violence from rural to urban areas. A report by SPT (2008b, p.28) showed that in Chitungwiza, Harare and Epworth which are known MDC strongholds, houses were burnt down and supporters beaten by alleged ZANU PF supporters. Bases were set up across the cities and in some high density suburbs. ZHRNF (2008d, p.2) reported that high density suburbs such as Chitungwiza south, Mbare and Epworth suffered the most brunt of election violence with Chitungwiza south recording 39 incidences which represents the highest number of violence cases, Mbare recording 31 incidences and Epworth had 23 cases. In all these cases, the pattern of violence involved systematic torture, assault, abduction and murder mostly being perpetrated against alleged MDC or ZANU PF supporters. The figure below illustrates violence by provinces in the run up and after the run-off election.

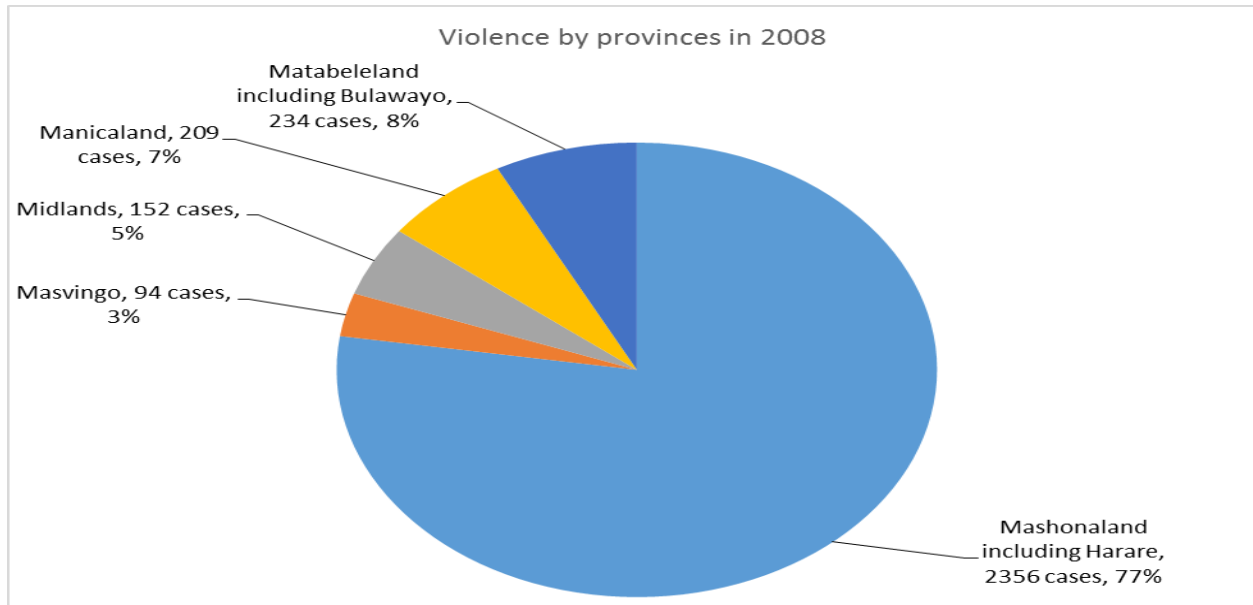


Figure 3: Violence by provinces between April, May and June

Source: Solidarity Peace Trust (2008b, p.27).

The nature of election violence during the run-off election in Zimbabwe falls within the category defined by Fischer (2002, p.8); Teshome (2009, p.463); Alexander and Tendi (2008, p.11); and Reeler (2008, p.1): it involves physical assault, torture, abduction, hate speech, intimidation, destruction of property, blackmailing, disappearances and assassinations. The run-off election violence raises both a theoretical question and a practical one. The theoretical question is what was the motivating paradigm for turning peaceful conditions in the first round in March 29 to become violent in the run-off on 27 June? The practical question is who instigated electoral violence in the run-off?

A number of theoretical explanations on the causes of election violence of 27 June 2008 have been suggested. For example, Alexander and Tendi (2008, p.9, 12) argue that the run-off electoral violence was retributive in that it was aimed at punishing, terrorizing and re-educating those who had voted for the opposition to come back into the fold of voting for the ruling party. Further they argued that events, which occurred in the run-up to the June elections, showed that ZANU PF was in a state of panic as a result of the surprise defeat by the opposition. According to a report by SPT (2008a, p.6), the run-off electoral violence was a response by ZANU-PF to the loss of an election in the first round. In similar thought, Meadow (2010, p.235) argues that Zimbabwe's political culture of intolerance was a key factor that exacerbated the run-off electoral violence.

A report by SPT (2008b, p.14) shows that the run-off electoral violence occurred in the context of a highly intolerant and repressive political culture which can be traced back to the colonial era but also manifested itself in the not so distant past – for example, the *Gukurahundi* conflict which ended in 1987. Although the development of Zimbabwe’s political culture is beyond the scope of this study, there is general consensus among various scholars that violence in the run-up to elections was used to maintain political power (SPT, 2004, p.9; 2007c, p.10; Alexander and Tendi, 2008, p.5; Reeler, 2008, p.2; SITO, 2008, p.3). Teshome (2009, p.463) and Fischer (2002, p.8) advise that by and large electoral violence can be used to influence the results of an election.

The practical question which relates to perpetrators of the run-off election violence is responded to by Teshome (2009, p.463) when he writes that: “in emerging democracies, electoral disputes mostly lead to electoral violence [because] ...law enforcement organs, army and police are not politically neutral.” In similar thought, Alexander and Tendi (2008, p.11); Reeler (2008, p.8) and Meadow (2010, p.238) argued that security forces involving army, police and prison officers, members of parliament, and war veterans were primary instigators of the run-off election violence. They go further to explain that state security forces often used youth militias in the establishment of bases commonly known as torture camps and in mobilizing ZANU PF supporters to perpetuate election violence. On perpetrators of electoral violence in 2008, shown in Figure 4, ZANU PF supporters, war veterans, security forces (army and police officers) and MDC supporters were fingered. In total, 3,564 cases were perpetrated in the run up to, during and after elections in 2008.

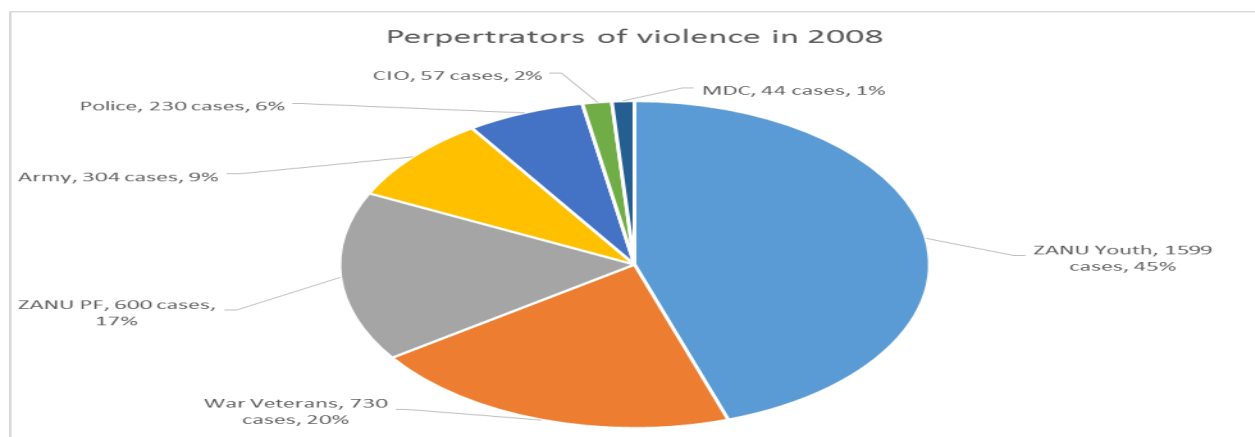


Figure 4: Perpetrators of violence between April, May and June

Source: Solidarity Peace Trust (2008b, p.26).

Figure 4 shows the proportion of perpetrators of violence related to elections in Zimbabwe. One percent of violent cases (44) were alleged to MDC supporters while 17 percent (600) were alleged to ZANU PF

supporters. Of the 3,564 cases alleged to different perpetrators, two percent (57), six percent (230) and nine percent (304) were perpetrated by security forces linked to ZANU PF. An additional 45 percent (1599) were perpetrated by ZANU PF youths and 20 percent (730) by war veterans. As statistics indicate, perpetrators linked to ZANU PF were most prominent. However, the MDC was also involved in perpetuating electoral violence.

The irony of it all was that it was people at the grassroots who bore the heaviest brunt of electoral violence. Figure 5 below shows statistics on the age of victims. As the report by SPT (2008b, p.33) showed “The impact of being beaten, witnessing beatings of parents and of being displaced from your home and schooling have been serious and will have long term implications for affected families.” This assertion indicates that disunity between political elites infiltrated local communities which otherwise were relatively peaceful, resulting in local people turning against each other with the majority still suffering from the trauma of electoral violence. Statistics on figure 5 below indicate that individuals within the age range of between 21 and 40 were the most affected group, recording the highest number of cases of violence.

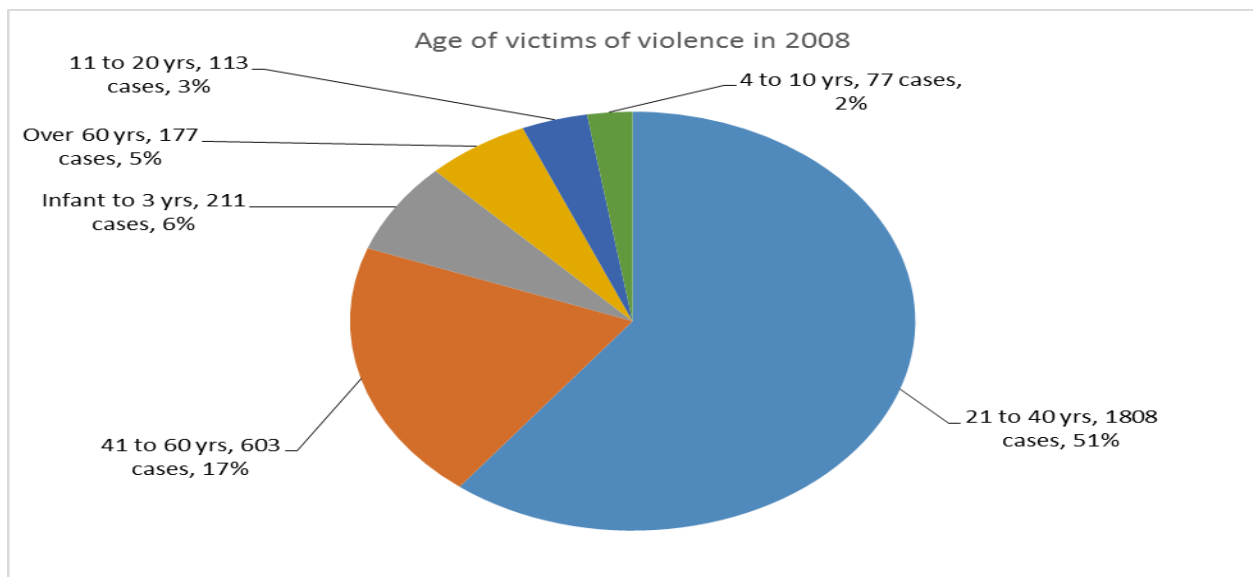


Figure 5: Age of victims between April, May and June

Sources: Solidarity Peace Trust (2008b, p.34)

Overall, as statistics indicate, the entire population was affected by electoral violence that erupted in 2008 because children from the age of 3 years suffered violence of various proportions and this include elderly people within the age range of 60 years and above. In similar thought, the parties to the GPA

acknowledged that the electoral violence bred divisions, polarization, conflict, intolerance, patronage, hate and intimidation among other threats to the entire population in Zimbabwe (SPT, 2008b, p.41). The important thing to note is that the GPA was a game changer given the relative peaceful conditions that followed in 2009 onwards.

Developments between 2009 and 2013

As previously mentioned, in 2008, there was an electoral conflict that became inconclusive resulting in the formation of a peace process called the GPA which culminated into a GNU. Like any other disputants, the process to the GNU was characterized by moments of difficulty stages as principal parties made threats to discontinue the process. Nonetheless, the fact that all the principals realized the need to address electoral conflict in Zimbabwe through dialogue in order to iron out points of convergence is enough evidence of the usefulness of leadership as a factor for addressing conflict.

Much of scholarly attention on factors that work for peace in modern communities has focused on political indabas. These have examined the impact of political statements by political elites in Zimbabwe. For example, starting 2011, the parties to the 2009 GNU delivered speeches meant to promote tolerance, respect, and to end violence (Chikova, 2011, p.1; Gumbo, 2011, p.1; Murwira and Gumbo, 2011, p.1). In other words, the signing of a memorandum of understanding, which culminated into the GNU in Zimbabwe, was a demonstration of accommodation, tolerance and willingness to co-exist with individuals with competing views. Although, Zimbabwean communities were exposed to electoral violence in the period before 2013, political party leaders spent the better part of 2011 and the whole of 2012 brokering peace. In fact, political parties were on the forefront and therefore it was not surprising to hear them saying: *peace begins with me, peace begins with you and peace begins with all of us*, which became the motto especially in the run up to the 2013 general elections. When compared to previous elections, in 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008, the 2013 harmonized election in particular, though not perfect was relatively peaceful. This puts into perspective and brings out the role played by political elites as an important factor in promoting peace at all levels of the community. Similarly, leadership was a critical element in the development of I4P in Zimbabwe.

2.4 An overview of the development of I4P in Zimbabwe

This section discusses in detail developments surrounding the four major I4P that were put in place by the government from 1980 through to the 2000s. The four major I4Ps established by the government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) are: the 1980 reconciliation policy; ONHRI in 2009; the Joint Monitoring and

Implementing Committee (JOMIC) in 2009 and the NPRC in 2013 to address peace challenges affecting modern Zimbabwe.

2.4.1 The national reconciliation policy of 1980

After the demise of colonialism on 17 April 1980, the policy of reconciliation, a peace-oriented guiding principle aimed at inculcating peaceful co-existence between whites and blacks, was adopted by the new GoZ (Zhou and Hardlife, 2012, p.213). This was the first ever I4P in post-independence Zimbabwe to address peace challenges associated with the colonial conflict which had degenerated into a liberation war. However, Machakanja (2010, p.10) points out that the policy of reconciliation was targeting the main political rival, the Rhodesian Front. This suggests that reconciliation policy in 1980 demonstrated a glaring lack of participation of the majority black people at the grassroots. The failure to recognise and addresses inter-community animosities and tensions of the Shona themselves and Shona-Ndebele animosities in the reconciliation policy negatively impacted co-existence the aftermath of the liberation war. Peacebuilding aims to promote peaceful co-existence and tolerance amongst all communiites.

Huyse (2003, p.34) argues that while emphasizing peaceful co-existence between the minority white and black majority, this reconciliation policy overlooked ethnic reconciliation involving Shona and Ndebele, political reconciliation involving political divergences and animosities which existed between major liberation movements, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). Muzavazi (2014, p.95) argues that reconciliation policy in Zimbabwe was dominated by political elites. Further, he says that "the achievement of national healing has remained an elusive goal within the country perhaps because of the lack of political will and commitment and inclusivity in the process as a whole" (ibid, p.100).

Zhou and Hardlife (2012, p.213) pointed out that this reconciliation policy overlooked minority groups such as the Tonga people in Kariba, the Ndau people in south-east of Zimbabwe and some sections of the Ndebele people in the western side of Zimbabwe. According to them, although the policy was noble, the much anticipated national reconciliation did not materialize for a number of reasons. The major ones were inter-tribal, ethnic coherence and racial challenges that occurred in the first and second decades namely the tribally-based political tensions popularly known as the 'dissident cleansing' and the compulsory and aggressive acquisition of land by the GoZ (Huyse, 2003, p.34; Zhou and Hardlife, 2012, p.214). Commenting on the 1980 reconciliation policy in Zimbabwe, Muzavazi (2014, p.95) made these sentiments:

It has been highly polarised in terms of political affiliation and has been largely dominated by political elites who at the same time occupy positions in the leadership and governance process. The impact of this politicisation has been gross to the extent that the very objective of the process has been hampered and ultimately dashed.

The major contributing factor to the failure of Zimbabwe's first policy of reconciliation was the lack of participation by people at the grassroots. Machakanja (2010, p.11) suggests that the success of any reconciliation model should depend on the extent to which it has become inclusive and consultative from the design to the implementation. This policy fell short far off the model proposed by Machakanja. Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru (2013, p.82) points out that what "occurred in Zimbabwe was reconciliation without justice..." in that it failed to address structures of injustice that were involved in perpetuating inequalities over the contentious land issue.

Supportively, Zhou and Hardlife (2012, p.34) argued that giving back land to the dispossessed black population by the minority white community remained a mirage in the first decade. Further, they said a twin culture of amnesia and impunity to perpetrators of violence during the liberation war and the Matabeleland disturbances contributed significantly to weakening the efficacy of the reconciliation policy. On the basis of these arguments raised above, it is clear that although the 1980 reconciliation policy was noble and timely, it was marred by a number of discrepancies and for that reason, it did not achieve the intended results, and thus it left the population divided.

2.4.2 ONHRI in 2009

After two more decades, an attempt to address peace challenges was made in 2008, through a mechanism called ONHRI. ONHRI was the second I4P established by the GNU to address peace challenges associated with electoral violence. Subsequently, the establishment of ONHRI formed the basis "for developing an I4P in Zimbabwe" (Zembe, 2013, p.33). Kumar and De la Haye (2012, p.14) suggest that an I4P helps a country emerging from a conflict in a variety of ways. The major one is that an I4P seeks to address resource-based and electoral conflicts. Related to this, Article V of the GPA in Zimbabwe incubated into the ONHRI, acknowledged by the principal signatories, that the new government inherited a system of inequality in terms of land distribution from the former colonial government. In the preamble to the GPA, it was acknowledged that polarization, divisions, conflict and intolerance were rife in Zimbabwean communities. Thus, Article VII (c) stated that the parties:

Shall give consideration to the setting up of a mechanism to properly advise on what measures might be necessary and practicable to achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre-and post independence political conflicts.

Viewed from this angle, ONHRI was an I4P during the life-span of the GNU that expired in 2013. According to Article VII of the GPA, ONHRI was put in place for the “promotion of equality, national healing, cohesion and unity.” Chinoputsa (2012, p.5) states that ONHRI was a mechanism “to end the vicious cycle of violence.” However, despite this noble framework, violence continued to rear its ugly face in various sections of the society (ibid). Chinoputsa goes on to say that the continual persecution of certain sections of the population during election period seemed to have sustained the cycle of violence instead of containing it because at some point victims turned out to become perpetrators (ibid., 2012, p.5). Thus, ONHRI, as a pro-peace mechanism, was bent on building a violent free Zimbabwean society based on the values of co-existence, respect for the rights of other people, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation (to not provide an exhaustive list). It also sought to prevent violence in all sections of the society to allow peace and development to take precedence in the entire country.

In tracing the role of ONHRI in promoting reconciliation and healing the aftermath of the 2008 electoral violence, Machakanja (2010); Muzavazi (2014) and Mhandara (2014) were very critical of ONHRI due to its failure to achieve the much needed goal. For example, Mhandara (2014, p.112) concluded that it “remained a proverbial dog that could neither bark nor bite...” while Machakanja (2010, p.7) also concluded that it has remained a paper tiger. In addition, Mhandara (2014, p.123) argued that attempts to reconcile fractured communities “were just but cosmetic...”

Further, Machakanja (2010, p.4) and Chinoputsa (2012, p.5) identified the lack of political will and unclear steps on what to do in setting up structures to spearhead reconciliation to fractured communities as major reasons to the failure of ONHRI. Overall, proponents of post-conflict reconciliation in Zimbabwe argue that ONHRI failed to come up with “a mechanism to undertake this delicate exercise of national healing and reconciliation” (Chinoputsa, ibid., p.5).

Owing to the unending debates on what may have caused the failure of ONHRI to realize the much needed national healing and reconciliation, this study distances itself from this debate but focuses on the establishment of ONHRI as a basis for a preferred future without violence. The debate regarding the need to come up with mechanisms to address the legacy of violent conflict in Zimbabwe still continues.

2.4.3 The Joint Monitoring and Implementing Committee (JOMIC) in 2009

Another initiative created under the GPA bent on fostering tolerance the “security of persons and prevention of violence” was the creation of the JOMIC (Article 18). While ONHRI had a backward-looking approach seeking to address the legacy of violence in order to chart a better peaceful future, JOMIC had a forward-looking, to (a) “promote the values and practices of tolerance, respect, nonviolence and dialogue as a means of resolving political differences” (GPA, Article 18 (5)). JOMIC was a mechanism designed to put inter-party violence under check during the life-span of the GNU among other functions. Parallel to a peace committee, JOMIC was an inclusive committee but along political lines because it only catered for ZANU PF and the two MDC formations. It comprised of twelve members four from each of the three major rival political parties in the country. Chigora and Guzura (cited in Hlhatywayo, Mukono and Mukashi (2015, p.275) points out that JOMIC was a multi-partisan panel which derived its mandate on Article 18, suggesting that it was inclusive in as far as major political parties in Zimbabwe were concerned.

CCFS (2012, p.12) applauded JOMIC for creating structures at both provincial and district levels bent on addressing inter-party violence, but argued that these structures were very lean in terms of constituency representation because a large number of stakeholders also affected by conflict were not included. As Lederach (1997, p.39) rightly asserts that conflict affects almost every member of the population from the grassroots to the apex of the society. However, with JOMIC, stakeholders such as civic organizations and emerging political parties were not accommodated in the provincial and district structures and thus fanning divisions and discrimination that it sought to address.

International Crisis Group (2011, p.6) reports that one of JOMIC’s mandate involved intervening in cases of inter-party violence. Within that mandate, as a response to endemic inter-party violence involving political parties in Zimbabwe, JOMIC established provincial and district liaison committees. CCSF (2012, p.21) commended the setting up of liaison committees by JOMIC as a positive development that was aimed at addressing the problem of violence, thus enhancing peacebuilding efforts by inculcating tolerance and co-existence between different political party adherents. Furthermore, CCSF reported that ideally, these liaison committees were to serve as early warning mechanisms. In that sense, it can still be argued that JOMIC was a peace structure given that one of its mandates was to address the problem of violence and to sustain peace through various modalities that were bent on inculcating tolerance, accommodation, respect and co-existence. The setting up of structures such as JOMIC to address violence was one of the indicators of willingness by Zimbabwean society to move towards a peaceful direction and such modalities are peace indicators (Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network,

2005). While, JOMIC was doing its best to address the problem of violence, its life span expired before society in Zimbabwe reaped its fruits in 2013, following the demise of the GNU. However, ONHRI and JOMIC helped to create an enabling environment for the establishment of the NPRC.

2.4.4 NPRC in 2013

During the lifespan of the GNU, the principal members acknowledged the need to address the problem of electoral violence and conflict issues affecting community cohesion, and therefore a pro-peace mechanism was put in place through a constitutional legal framework. This mechanism is popularly known as the NPRC and is enshrined in Chapter 12(6) sections 251, 252 and 253. Of interest to this study is section 252 entitled: *Functions of NPRC*. For purposes of illustration section 252 carries 10 functions and the first states that: (a), “to ensure post-conflict justice, healing and reconciliation,” the second, has it that: (b), “to develop and implement programmes to promote national healing, unity and cohesion in Zimbabwe and the peaceful resolution of disputes,” and (d), which declares that: “to develop procedures and institutions at national level to facilitate dialogue among political parties, communities, organizations and other groups, in order to prevent conflicts and disputes arising in the future.” These functions are discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight below.

There are three cardinal elements for peacebuilding outlined in section 252. These are: post-conflict justice, healing and reconciliation; the second is national healing programmes; third, conflict prevention and resolution institutions. On the basis of these elements there is every reason to commend the GoZ for striving to achieve “the restoration of a functioning community” (Odendaal and Olivier, 2008, p.24) through the promotion of healing and reconciliation.

The CCSF (2012, p.21) commends the GoZ for coordinated efforts to collaborate with civil society in the process involving the development of a national peace framework in accordance with Article VI of the GPA. While Odendaal and Olivier (2008, p.13) acknowledged that governments should provide the legal and policy frameworks for peacebuilding programme as was the case in Kenya and elsewhere, they, however, highlighted that most transitional governments in post-conflict situations assume that post-conflict justice, healing and reconciliation should only be elite-driven. They lamented that this attitude negates efforts by local communities which are better placed to advance the values of reconciliation and healing at grassroots levels.

In Zimbabwe, the NPRC represents an I4P which is elite-driven and has a 10-year life span according to the constitution of Zimbabwe. van Tongeren has it that an I4P can live for a period between 10 and 20

years: in the case of Zimbabwe, the achievements of the NPRC are yet to be realized in the next nine years or so, that is until 2024. It is upon the realization of the challenges of embarking in post-conflict peacebuilding for the next 9 to 10 years under the framework of NPRC, that the GoZ has put in place a strategy involving collaboration between local civic organizations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and national partners to a spearhead and implement peacebuilding programmes both at provincial and district levels. This strategy is called ‘*Support to peacebuilding and increased access to sustainable livelihoods*’ (PBIASL).

2.4.5 Strategy implemented by government to address peace challenges in Zimbabwe

As argued above, ONHRI played a mid-wifely role for the establishment of the NPRC and it was during the life-span of ONHRI that the GoZ came up with strategies meant to promote peacebuilding across communities one of which was the PBIASL.

2.4.5.1 PBIASL

In partnership with UNDP, the government came up with a programme: *Support for Peacebuilding and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods (PBIASL)*. It was first tried in 2012 to 2014 (Ittig, and Kadzikano, 2014, p.5; GoZ and UNDP, 2014). Implementing partners of PBIASL were ONHRI, and ministries such as Local Government Public Works and National Housing; Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development.

Since PBIASL was targeting the whole of Zimbabwe, two sister ministries that acted as gatekeepers into rural communities were the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Gender and Community Development and the Ministry of Youth, Development, Indigenization and Empowerment (Ittig, and Kadzikano, 2014, pp.5-6). The purpose of the PBIASL was to enhance the capacities of ONHRI in coordinating this pro-peace agenda at district, provincial and national levels. In the preamble, PBIASL states that: “the programme seek to contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for peacebuilding and development in Zimbabwe...” Of the four objectives, the first two are of interest to the current study:

1. National capacities for dialogue, peacebuilding, prevention, management and resolution of conflict strengthened;
2. Community capacities (women and youth) for recovery and conflict sensitive sustainable livelihoods increased at local levels.

Objective 1 focused on the framework for conflict transformation, national healing and reconciliation and objective 2, focused on the livelihoods component.

Owing to Objective 1, a number of achievements have been made. The major one was the development of the Zimbabwe National Policy Framework for Peace and Reconciliation that translated into the establishment of the national I4P –the NPRC. The Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenization and Empowerment and Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Gender and Community Development, besides being gatekeepers into rural villages in Zimbabwe were responsible for peacebuilding outreach initiatives that fell under the first objective. In addition, the CCSF was instrumental in the institutionalization of the legal framework for NPRC (see Table 1 below for developments of I4P in Zimbabwe from 2009). The visibility of CCSF on the digital billboard of the NPRC adds weight to the significant role that civic organisations have played in Zimbabwe in the implementation of strategies aimed at addressing peace challenges in Zimbabwe (see Figure 6 below).

Objective 2 was associated with livelihoods restoration at local community levels targeting mostly women and youth. Ministries that have been instrumental in livelihoods restoration include the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Corporative Development. These ministries work together with ward development committees (WADCO) and village development committees (VIDCO) in rural areas to spearhead development programmes (GoZ and UNDP, 2014). WADCO and VIDCO were established by the Rural District Councils ACT (Chapter 29:13, Section 59). A WADCO is chaired by the ward councillor while a VIDCO is chaired by a village head. Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing (1994, p.32) pointed out that a VIDCO has six members of which four are elected by the village assembly while two are appointed by the village head. They highlighted that of the appointee members one is occupied by a woman another by a youth thus, affirming the Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17) section 22 which states that “every village or ward assembly shall ensure the adequate representation of women, the youth and other interests groups...” Section 22 attempts to achieve inclusivity, which is seen as a major driver of development at community level.

Since development seeks to address insecurities at local community level relating to poverty, illiteracy and diseases, among others, participation by various stakeholders in the village is considered a key variable and women and youth are at the centre of decision making process. These elements find expression in the PBIASL programme, which sought to strengthen the capacities of both women and youth through livelihoods restoration. The promotion and creation of an enabling environment for women and youth to embark on income generating activities was seen as one of the key strategies to livelihoods restoration. By and large, livelihood restoration has proved to be a building block for communities to live in peace and for that reason, the establishment of PBIASL helped to create an enabling environment for civic organizations to form a coalition in order to implement this strategy.

2.5 Civic organizations involved in the implementation of PBIASL

In its endeavour to embark on post-conflict peacebuilding aimed at addressing peace challenges affecting communities, the GoZ collaborated with various civic organizations. Lederach (1997, p.39) argues that peacebuilding requires the collaboration of various actors representing all constituencies that have been affected by conflict. In Zimbabwe, civic organizations that represent grassroots have been involved in peacebuilding activities for several decades and it was these peacebuilding activities that served as the point of departure for the current study. Thus, this study acknowledges the work done by civic organizations in that they have also provided direction in terms of trends and patterns of peacebuilding in contemporary Zimbabwe. However, it is not possible to include all civic organizations involved in peacebuilding at local community level; nevertheless, those deemed relevant to the current study in terms of their involvement in setting up informal peace committees in partnership with government are listed below.

1. Church and Civil Society forum (CCSF)
2. Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust (ZIMCET)
3. Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF)

The activities of each civic organization were reviewed below.

2.5.1 CCSF

CCSF was established in May 2009 by 25 civic organizations operating in Zimbabwe to collaborate with government in the national healing and reconciliation programme (see a time-line of events in Table 1 below). In the processes leading to the constitution making, CCSF worked hand in glove with ONHRI to operationalize issues to do with national healing and reconciliation leading to the creation of NPRC in the constitution to support peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

Table 1: Development of the NPRC in Zimbabwe from 2009

Year	Stakeholders involved	Activity	End result
February 2009	GNU	Creation of GPA (Article VII)	Establishment of ONHRI
May 2009	CSSF	Holds a peace conference	Implementation of national reconciliation and healing
July 2009	CCSF	Develops a discussion paper	Development of the national peace framework
November 2009-April 2010	CCSF and ONHRI (co-chaired by J. Nkomo-ZANU PF; S. Holland (MDC-T; and G. Sibanda (MDC-N)	Held nationwide consultation on the development of a national infrastructure for peace framework	Draft national policy framework for peace and reconciliation (ZNPFPFR)

April 2012	CCSF and ONHRI	Submission of the ZNPFPR to cabinet	Operationalization of the national infrastructure for peace framework in the new constitution of Zimbabwe
May 2012-February 2013	CCSF, ONHRI and other actors	Lobbied for the inclusion of an I4P in the new constitution	Operationalization of the national infrastructure for peace framework in the new constitution of Zimbabwe
March 2013	GoZ and civil society	Constitutional referendum and subsequent adoption of the setting out of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC)	Creation of NPRC in the constitution to support peacebuilding in Zimbabwe
May 2013	GoZ	Adoption of a new constitution	Chapter 12(6): The NPRC

Source: www.ccsf.org.zw

Resultantly, by May 2013, the constitution was adopted. In support of the NPRC, CCSF has erected about 25 digital billboards carrying the message of peace, reconciliation, healing and integration, shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6: National peace and reconciliation commission billboard

Source: <https://www.facebook.com>

Five of these were erected in major cities namely Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare and Gweru. CCSF was involved in partnership with ONHRI in developing a legal framework for NPRC; other civic organizations such as ZIMCET and ECLF were involved in setting up informal peace committees at community levels.

2.5.2 Experiences of informal LPCs in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, a number of civic organizations are involved in setting up informal peace committees. For example, *Heal Zimbabwe Trust* has established peace clubs in Birchenough Bridge, Buhera West and South in Manicaland province, Gokwe in Midlands province, Muzarabani in Mashonaland Central province and Zaka in Masvingo province (Heal Zimbabwe Trust, 2015). *Envision Zimbabwe* has established peace committees in Hurungwe district in Mashonaland west province and elsewhere (2014).

While the work of these civic organizations suggest significant and important milestones in charting for a peaceful future Zimbabwean community, I have purposively selected work on peace committees by ZIMCET on the basis of its experiences with peace committees in Zimbabwe the aftermath of the 2002 electoral violence. Also, ECLF was selected because it was directly involved with ONHRI as implementing partner of the PBIASL programme in the area of peacebuilding and was instrumental in running CPMRT sensitization workshops in Ward 8 of Seke district, which happened to be my study area.

2.5.2.1 The case of ZIMCET

The history of peace committees in Zimbabwe is associated with ZIMCET, a grassroots organization founded in 2000 following electoral and farm invasion-related violence in the subsequent years. According to ZIMCET (2014),

The idea of forming and using peace committees as a means of cultivating and fostering a culture of peace and tolerance among grassroots communities was born out of the realization by ZIMCET that violence, particularly that of a politically nature as was experienced during the 2000 general election and the preceding ones, was mainly carried out by marginalized groups like the youth and the unemployed.

Before the introduction of peace committees, wide consultation was held with grassroots communities in provinces such as Masvingo and Manicaland (the eastern region), Harare-Chitungwiza region, Mashonaland region among other regions, comprising of taskforces involving church members and traditional leaders at village levels. These taskforces were responsible for maintenance of peaceful co-existence, social harmony and tolerance among members of different political parties. Following this intervention, positive results were realized in places such as Chipinge, Mutasa, Buhera and Chiendambuya with numbers of community members “exceeding hundreds attending organized peacebuilding meetings at village levels.” By the end of 2002, ZIMCET had adopted the concept of peace committee into use (ZIMCET, 2014).

ZIMCET (2014) defines a peace committee as the “liaison grouping that would be tasked with calling for a departure from a culture of violence to that of peace and tolerance.” This liaison group is comprised of individuals representing various constituencies in a community. Stakeholders for the peace committees are identified by host communities and these include political leaders, traditional leaders, church leaders, war veterans, women and youth (*ibid*). As a result, ZIMCET established peace committees throughout the 10 provinces in Zimbabwe from 2002. For example, in Harare-Chitungwiza region, about nine peace committees had been established by 2004. In Mashonaland region, comprised of Mashonaland West and Central, about 11 peace committees had been set up by 2004. Eastern region comprising of Masvingo, Manicaland and Mashonaland East had set up 13 peace committees by the end of 2004. The southern region, comprised of Bulawayo, Matabeleland South and North and Midlands and ZIMCET, had established 16 peace committees by 2004.

ZIMCET acknowledged that in spite of hurdles such as the lack of political will by some political leaders and funding to sustain the programme, local communities in Zimbabwe have been responsive to the establishment of peace committees. In view of this, ZIMCET (2014) reported that “...the entire programme has maintained relevance throughout the country and communities have collectively defended it...” The tone of this report suggests that the local communities owned the programme. On another note, ZIMCET reported that:

The use of local leaders in the promotion of peace brings a certain level of continuity to the programme in that even when funds run out, the chances are that the knowledge imparted on members of the committees will continue to be taken advantage of by the community as it will be for the benefit of the entire community (2014).

ZIMCET reflected that despite difficulties and setbacks especially between 2003 and 2004 in setting up peace committees in local communities, by 2005, about 70 peace committees had been established in various provinces across the country. One notable merit owing to the establishing peace committees in Zimbabwe was that politically volatile communities have been reached with the message of peace.

Another merit reported by ZIMCET (2014) was that: “peace committee members from different political affiliations demonstrated commendable levels of maturity and acceptance of each other’s views.” However, ZIMCET was involved in setting up peace committees even before the electoral violence of 2008 ensued. This is akin to the Wajir peace committees in Kenya, established in 1994, before electoral violence began in 2007. This trend, in which communities that have set up LPCs experience politically-motivated violence, does not suggest that LPCs are incapable of promoting peace. Narrative 0002, an informant in this study, made these points:

Peace committees often do not have the capacity to deal directly with political level conflicts. This limitation is especially noticeable during election time when political polarisation in communities takes centre stage. Even peace committees formed mainly of members of different political parties are often found wanting during these times. This paralysis is mainly due to the fact that these types of conflicts are usually instigated from outside of the community by people at a higher level within the political formations involved, such that the local political functionaries merely follow orders (see Appendix 7).

This excerpt emphasizes the point that informal peace committees are faced with challenges of failing to mitigate conflicts beyond their capacities, in particular, politically-motivated conflicts. van Tongeren (2011, p.107) asserts that I4P with a national mandate “have more impact and legitimacy” as compared to informal peace committees. This impact has more to do with official recognition than sustainability. However, in terms of sustainability, informal peace committees have greater potential than formal peace committees because informal peace committees are owned and driven by communities themselves and therefore have more chances of achieving their aspirations. On this basis, this study explored possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding efforts in Zimbabwe.

2.5.2.2 The case of ECLF

ECLF was initiated in 2008 by major ecumenical bodies in response to the upsurge of electoral violence in Zimbabwe and was registered as a trust in 2010 (Cele, 2013, p.4). As a religious grouping, it emerged that it was important to play a positive role and to contribute towards peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Cele points out that ECLF is mainly focused on three major areas: healing and reconciliation [peacebuilding]; good governance and accountability; and constitution-making. From his perspective, good governance and constitution-making have fed into peacebuilding initiatives, which have turned out to become the major programme area for ECLF over the years.

ECLF was in former partnership with ONHRI, later transformed into the NPRC, UNDP and Swedish International Development Agency conducting peacebuilding outreach initiatives in all 10 provinces in Zimbabwe under the auspices of PBISL. The thrust of ECLF is contained in Objective 1 of PBISL, which focuses mainly on peacebuilding outreach initiatives. The initiatives involve capacity-building workshops targeting church leadership and the community at large (Cele, 2013, p.4). GoZ and UNDP (2014). ONHRI worked in collaboration with ECLF to conduct CPMRT workshops across Zimbabwe targeting people at the grassroots levels such as traditional leadership, youth, women and other government representatives. The Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenization and Empowerment; and Ministry of

Women's Affairs Gender and Community Development have benefited as a result of the capacitation of their workforce through ECLF-run CPMRT sensitization workshops (Ittig, and Kadzikano (2014, p.20).

CPMRT sensitization workshops by ECLF vary from one to five days. Ittig, and Kadzikano (2014, p.18) pointed out that since its inception, 35,000 people have benefited from the CPMRT throughout Zimbabwe with 60 per cent are women (GoZ and UNDP, 2014). They applauded ECLF, saying that "the foremost and commendable achievements of the objective 1 of the PBISL include capacity building of local leaders in the conflict transformation and the establishment of LPCs under the aegis of ECLF" (2014, p.21). In their 2014 report, ECLF highlighted that about 2,179 females and 1,815 males have benefited from CPMRT sensitization workshops. The increased visibility of ECLF in local peacebuilding initiatives have attracted the attention of government ministries such as the Ministry of Local Government, Labour and social Welfare, Culture Fund Trust of Zimbabwe, Chitungwiza Municipality and their staff have benefited significantly from ECLF run capacity building workshops (ECLF, 2015).

Cele (2013) points out that owing to CPMRT sensitization workshops, a unique product called peace committee has increasingly gathered momentum in local communities that ECLF had sensitized. Peace committees represent grassroots peace initiatives that are a direct response of the community to take care of its own well-being (Moyo, undated, p.92). In similar thought, Paffenholz (2013, p.1) notes that there has been a "substantial shift in focus from international to local peacebuilding." This shift is due to relatively remarkable impacts on the tenor and peacebuilding trends in other countries that have experienced violent conflicts but have mitigated conflict by putting in place peace committees.

In Zimbabwean communities, for the past five years or so that ECLF has been involved as an important partner and implementer of objective 1 of PBISL, several peace committees have been established through the CPMRT sensitization workshops. For instance, by the end of 2014, about 79 communities spread out in 18 districts across Zimbabwe had put in place peace committees (ECLF, 2015). ECLF (2015) defines peace committees as "structures established by communities after a three day CPMRT training workshop." Moyo (undated, p.92) strongly supports this notion that communities are the ones responsible for establishing these peace structures.

These peace committees are made up of chairpersons, deputies, secretaries, treasurers and committee members. ECLF reported that there are no hard and fast rules in terms of procedures for setting up peace committees across communities, each pool of trained participants use methods that they are already familiar with. Some communities prefer to use appointments, others select each other through the ballot

system in which individuals considered suitable are nominated and the Electoral College, comprising of village members, write their names on pieces of paper. The person who garners the highest number of votes occupies the contested post. In some WPCs in the Wedza district, I was made to understand that although participants select each other through the ballot system, posts such as the chairperson and secretary remain uncontested. In fact, trends in Wedza district have shown that WPC chairpersons are reserved for traditional leadership such as village heads and headmen while secretariat posts are occupied by ward councillors. In those wards, without a headman, the councillor automatically became the chairperson of the WPC (details on narratives on WPC in Wedza district are presented in Chapter Six). Overall, it appears all informal peace committees in Wedza and Marondera districts have employed the self-selection model. Authorities in the field such as van Tongeren (2011, p.108) contend that local communities make use of self-selection process (details on the self-selection model are in Chapter Eight).

In Ward 8 of Seke district, the self-selection model was employed. The majority of participants who are now members of peace committees were trained through the CPMRT between 15, 16 and 17 May 2013. The WPC was set up on 7 November 2014 as a community initiative but also as a requirement for my PhD research (details on procedures for setting up a WPC and VPCs are in Chapter Six below). As mentioned before, work with a small advisory team WPC was put in place in November 2014 and five VPCs were put in place in February 2015 using the self-selection model.

Thus, under the auspices of ECLF, peace committees have been established in various parts of the country in Zimbabwe using the self-selection model. For example, in Chivi district of Masvingo province, of the 32 wards, 23 have established peace committees, meaning that there were 23 peace committees by 2014. To date, peace committees have been established in Mutasa district in Manicaland province, Mashonaland East province, Harare province in particular Chitungwiza, Matabeleland province in places such as Nkai, Kezi, Binga and Bulawayo province among other places (ECLF, 2015). The contribution of informal peace committees to peacebuilding is discussed below.

2.5.3 The contributions of informal LPCs to peacebuilding in Zimbabwe

First and foremost, it is important to note that LPCs are an approach to peacebuilding both at the macro and micro level (Lederach, 1997, p.146). One of the major contributions of LPCs to peacebuilding is that LPCs bring together stakeholders from conflicting parties to jointly create a committee that explore ways to address peace challenges. For example, in Zimbabwe, the setting up of an inclusive peace committee comprising of ZANU PF and MDC represented a fundamental breakthrough of the polarization that existed from 2002. In high-density suburbs where these peace committees were put in place, these

inclusive committees paid off when we consider co-existence and tolerance in the aftermath of polarization that marked the political history of Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008. ZIMCET (2014) echoed similar sentiments that "the approach [peace committee] has managed to secure participation of political leaders from all parties at the same level, which is necessary to ensure the political will to promote peace, denounce violence and foster tolerance in districts." By their very nature, peace committees contributed significantly to peacebuilding in that they have created space for conflicting parties to work in unison towards the common goal characterized by accommodation, co-existence and tolerance. A report by ZIMCET (2014) reflected that:

Parties such as United Parties and ZANU were included in the matrix. Such a multi-sectoral approach paid dividends resulting in politicians failing to pin ZICET down, on allegations of being partisan, as people from different political persuasions were freely participating in the peace programmes (2014).

In addition, peace committees established by ZIMCET in Mashonaland West province contributed to sensitizing community members in on issues to do with conflict management and gender issues as they relate to violence against women and children. In this province about 72 workshops were conducted by ZIMCET to educate communities on conflict issues, drawing about 3,804 participants. Similarly, Mashonaland Central hosted 54 ZIMCET run workshops which pulled about 3,982 participants in total. These workshops were targeting both men and women (2014).

Furthermore, peace committees have contributed significantly in the dissemination of information and equipping of local communities with peacebuilding skills. A report by ZIMCET on induction workshops conducted in Bulawayo, Matabeleland South and North reflects that:

From time to time induction workshops are conducted to equip the committees with the necessary information and skills to carry out peacebuilding activities in their districts. The content of the induction workshops for peace committees is primarily meant to make them own the process of peacebuilding... (2014).

The important contribution made by peace committee is that "those responsible for the actual implementation of the programme are community members who build local confidence in peace processes" (ZIMCET, 2014). In other words, peace committees have helped to open up opportunities for communities to take responsibility for their own peace.

Yet again, peace committees have also helped in the reduction of crime rates in Mutasa district. During a site visit, the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) deputy assistance commissioner commended peace committees in Mutasa district as diligent. In his remarks, he said:

The Mutasa for peace committee has made our policing work easier. In the run up to the elections last year we hardly got any serious cases of politically motivated violence as compared to previous elections due to the peace work of this committee. The more common cases these days are domestic violence, boundary disputes and public nuisance cases. I think we have reached a point where we can refer some cases to the committee to address and I urge them to set up a reference desk in a public area. We work very well with them and they never do anything without the involvement of the police (ECLF, 2014).

An analysis of the above excerpt, reveals that peace committees are a step in the direction that leads to mutual policing at community level. Mutual policing involves members of the group collectively preventing individuals from acting in their own self interests (Hammond and Keller, 2004, p.1472). The purpose of mutual policing is to achieve group cooperation, considered a public good. Policing represses competition while increasing cooperation. Cooperation is a behaviour that promotes the well-being of a group (Gardner and West, 2004, p.753). Thus, peace committees have contributed to mutual policing in Mutasa district in Manicaland province.

In the same vein, the District Medical Director, who also gave a speech during a site visit in Mutasa district made similar sentiments.

At the hospitals in the district we had become accustomed to treating people with axes in their heads and we have seen some ugliest wounds caused by all sorts of dangerous weapons mainly due to politically motivated violence towards the 2008 elections. This has changed drastically in the community as we have been having fewer cases of politically motivated violence. People say that this committee, with members from various parties, has played a role in bringing down the violence (ECLF, 2014).

Again, this excerpt gives credit to the role played by peace committees in Mutasa district in helping to reduce electoral violence in 2008. Commenting on the contributions of Mutasa district peace committees, the UNDP country director had this to say:

We are encouraged by the testimonies we have heard here today. Politics should not be a negative source of tension. I think you people are turning that wrong notion around. You have a unique model that others can only learn from and adapt to their circumstances. Even the NPRC will have to draw from your experience. You can be the beginning of the peace architecture of this country (ECLF, 2014).

The above sentiments suggest that informal peace committees can feed into the NPRC. This notion was also mentioned by Moyo (undated, p.92) when he said that LPCs have the capacity to feed into the NPRC. Elsewhere, peace committees have contributed significantly by empowering local community members with skills on how to handle conflicts constructively. During an interview in Chivi district of Masvingo province, Ward 15 LPC chairperson remarked that:

This programme has always been valued in our community that is why I was sent to the programme by the kraal head in the first place. It has changed the way we do business in the local traditional court. If it was not for this programme, there are a couple of people who could have been expelled from the chief's advisory committee but I played a conciliatory role to block the expulsion (ECLF, 2014).

The chairperson of the LPC in Chivi district acknowledged the transformative role of the peace committee framework in terms of how conflicts are now handled in their locality. To corroborate, the LPC secretary of Ward 15 commented that: "Because of the training, I am able to address some conflicts here at home through dialogue rather than taking them to the courts where one of them would emerge poor by losing a beast or other prized possessions" (ECLF, 2014). This piece of evidence bring into perspective that informal peace committees are increasingly becoming a force to reckon in post-independence Zimbabwe. The obvious question is what could have contributed to the establishment of informal peace committees in Zimbabwe in the 2000s, given the trail of electoral violence that has characterized the history of Zimbabwe in the last two decades?

2.5.4 Factors influencing the establishment of informal LPCs in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe and elsewhere, people are now coming from the misperception that peace only comes from the government through the provision of employment, education, safety and other basic services. From experience, it appears, local communities have now come to the realization that they are responsible for their own peace as individuals, and groups and this explains why local people are involved in setting up structures to create peace in their villages. Further, it appears local people have come to the realization that the government, which is supposed to protect them from various insecurities such as poverty, hunger, and violent conflict, has in fact proved incapable and in some cases has turned a blind eye to addressing these insecurities. In South Africa for instance, the Marikana massacre tells insightful stories about the role of government in protecting the aspirations of citizens: about 34 individual miners were killed for expressing disgruntlement against their employer in 2012.

In Zimbabwe, a lively example was the eviction of street vendors in July 2015 from central business districts across the country, however, the government created this situation indirectly by not providing

employment, basic services and in coming up with modalities to address the economic tumult which has gripped the country, plunging citizens into the informal vending market in order to make ends meet. Vending is one of the strategies by which the majority of people experiencing economic loss try to cope with life and the need for food, clothing, rentals and school fees.

Some of the people who are actively engaged in street vending are educated youths. Education in Zimbabwe is not subsidized from primary to tertiary levels. In fact, people pay fees for themselves and at the end of the day there is no employment and worse still, those who are employed are not paid on time due to the prevailing economic crisis. In the majority of cases of those educated street vendors, the Shona imperative *Chirere chigokurerawo* (look after your children today so that tomorrow they will look after you), was the impetus for some parents to sacrifice their meagre salaries and even their livestock hoping that tomorrow after university that same graduate will help to put the family at a better position in terms of the provisions of food, shelter and other basic necessities needed in life. Most if not all university graduates were determined in having to pay their university dues and the government did not provide or subsidize their education.

In the figure below, disgruntled vendors marched towards parliament on 28 June 2015 to submit a petition signed by 26,000, urging government to halt eviction of vendors from central business districts across the country. Since vending has now turned out to become a means of livelihoods both for people in rural and urban centres, vendors were demanding that government should legalize vending in all the cities (see figure below).



Figure 7: Vendors protesting against government decision to evict them from CBD in Harare, July 2015

Source: <http://www.newsdezeimbabwe.co.uk/2015/06vendors-protest-in-harare.html>

Women and youth constitute the majority of street vendors and this includes the youth who have completed secondary and university education. The phrase on the poster held by protesters, Figure 7, suggests that for those who have attained higher education at university, the future still remains bleak and vending seemed to be the only option for now. Thus, failure by the government to provide employment and other services has led people at the grassroots to realize that they have to take responsibility for their own food, shelter and safety.

In such a time as this when economic doldrums are at play in Zimbabwe, peace committees have become instrumental not only in the improvement of livelihoods but also in building relationships between individuals and groups. In many respects, peace committees have proved viable, timely and they seem to provide a safe blanket especially for rural people that own assets such as chickens, space for market gardening among other locally available assets. Thus, peace committees have emerged at a time when communities are beginning to realize that government is not the sole guarantor of peace at community

level but members of the community have an equal share of responsibility to take care of peace in their communities.

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an overview of flash points on the history of Zimbabwe dating back to the pre-colonial era to the 2000s. The arrival of the Shona people into the country now called Zimbabwe around 1000 AD and the subsequent arrival of Ndebele people were highlighted. To situate this discussion in its historical context, Ndebele-Shona relations were explored in order to figure out possibilities of peacebuilding between these two major and other groupings in modern Zimbabwe. In particular, the chapter examined historical events surrounding Shona customary court system from the colonial era to post independence Zimbabwe. An overview of events surrounding Shona customary courts, provide a backcloth for the emergence of informal LPCs and how these two institutions have influenced each other in contemporary peacebuilding discourses. The chapter also illustrated how previous epochs in the history of Zimbabwe have left imprints of violence that manifested in the new political community, in particular, in the 2000s. The chapter concludes by taking a look at the development of I4P in Zimbabwe, in particular reconciliatory policy framework of 1980 and the mechanisms that followed such as ONHRI and JOMIC of 2009 and the current NPRC of 2013. Further, this chapter concludes that the development of I4P in Zimbabwe has had direct influence on the establishment of informal peace committees that are currently on the increase in Zimbabwe. However, the chapter noted that although informal peace committees have historically made some marked positive differences in the area of peacebuilding at community level, the GoZ seem not to have embraced them into mainstream peacebuilding. Although this chapter has adopted a backward looking to peace issues in Zimbabwe, it also, had a forward looking as its thrust was to explore possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in modern Zimbabwe.

PART II: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, the concept of transition was construed as change which results in the transformation of institutions and patterns of life in a community. Unplanned and voluntary changes are some of the types of change that takes place in communities for purposes of this study. Unplanned change results in communities becoming victims to social, economic and political events or developments which are usually beyond their capacity and can be viewed as the impulsion of voluntary change in which communities make efforts to modify or achieve their desirable goals (Poplin, 1972, p.210). The main goal of this chapter is to review the features of unplanned change with a view to establish whether and under what conditions communities undergoing violent transitional phases have coped and devised mechanisms to modify their life patterns in order to address peace challenges bedevilling their well-being?

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first examined the features of communities in transition/unplanned change namely; the *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society), modernization, evolutionary transition and development. These features demonstrated that communities always succumb to unplanned change and argued for or against the hypothesis that local communities are not fixed but always revolving and modifying their life patterns in response to forces of unplanned change. The second section examined the means by which peace is built in modern local communities. Using case studies, I have examined sport; football events, entrepreneurial activities and informal peace committees as response mechanisms by communities increasingly gathering momentum in contemporary peacebuilding. The third section explored the peace committee framework focusing especially on informal peace committees. Later, I explored possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe using the Kenya and Rwanda as reference points. The chapter concludes with a proposal for the establishment of district peace committee structures as a conduit for linking up VPCs with elite-driven peacebuilding mechanism, in particular the NPRC in Zimbabwe. The main goal of linking up VPC to the NPRC is to drive the peaceable values of the NPRC which are reconciliation and healing.

3.2 Section One: Communities in transition

In transitional discourses it is inappropriate not to have backward and forward looking if one is to make sense of how communities experience unplanned change in their life patterns (North *et al.*, 2009, p.90). They note that in human history, changes in patterns of social organization are strongly linked to how communities limit and manage violence, thus enhancing the link that exists between transition and peacebuilding. As mentioned already, the major features of unplanned change are *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society), modernization, evolutionary transition and development.

Gemeinschaft and *Gesellschaft* are premised on the assumption that communities are under threat from unplanned changes. This framework is attributed to Ferdinand Tonnies, a Germany sociologist who advanced the community transition thesis in the 1800s. He described *Gemeinschaft* as close face-to-face relationships in which behaviours of individuals are conditioned by blood ties, while *Gesellschaft* was described as associational life characterized by individual rights and privileges (Dunlap and Johnson, 2010). Tonnies points out that a stable and tightly knit community has suffered transitional mayhem resulting from industrialization and urbanization in the 19th century (Gowar, 2014, p.16) and replaced the close face-to-face relationships with heterogeneous, individualistic and densely-populated urban and rural communities. Elias (1974, p.71) viewed *Gemeinschaft* as privatized and exclusive life by communities. He notes that the features of *Gemeinschaft* include among other things, social organization along kinship, collective ownership of land, the worship of deities and maintenance of sacred places. Keller (2003, p.41) contends that *Gemeinschaft* refers “to a pattern of social life based on personal attachments, traditionalism and deep interpersonal affinities rooted in holism, loyalty, shared experiences and commitment to a totality.” This follows the emerging trend that communities before the emergence of the nation state were closely-knit along clan lines, which sees the present life patterns of communities as a disrupted social, economic and political organization. Changes in social, economic and political organization of closely-knit communities are viewed as driven by *Gesellschaft*.

Elias (1974, p.71) views *Gesellschaft* as public life. Keller’s (2003, p.41) conceptualisation of *Gesellschaft* is also relevant. He viewed *Gesellschaft* “as a more abstract, impersonal, formalized system of social rules, roles and institutions marked by selective affinities, rational calculations, formed exchange and negotiated interests and goals.” *Gesellschaft* is a heterogeneous population, which involves various interest groups, with a social order that is provided by an elected political leader. Thus, the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* framework are concerned with experiences and trajectories that impacted not only on the size and composition of communities but also the socio-economic, political, cultural norms and values.

The basis of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* is that transition of communities is a direct impact of industrialization and urbanization.

Adams (2002, p.3) points out that urbanization is just but one of the factors of transition. From his perspective, urbanization alone is not sufficient enough to cause a transition of society. In similar thought, Gugler and Flanagan's (1978, p.3) asserts that urbanization creates economic competition which breeds new identities owing to other contextual factors at play and taken together, these factors have the potential to make a significant transformation on the social, economic and political contexts of communities. Adams (2002, p.55) singled out cash economy as a major determinant of the transition of communities especially in the area of social relationships. He notes that when combined with other factors such as urbanization and migration, a cash economy can potentially have greater impact resulting in the transition of social, economic and political lives of people. Further, Adams concludes that as peasants become absorbed into commercial systems, obligations to share with kin members are likely to be abandoned, thus causing social disruption on closely-knit social networks and relationships. In similar thought, Bourdillon (1987, p.314) observed that the demands of urban life had greater impact on the closely-knit social networks and relationships among the Shona people of Zimbabwe ever since the 1890s.

Another feature of transition but also related to the above is modernization. Modernization refers to change in patterns of social organization from traditional to a modern system which is characterized with cash economy, state formation and science resulting in a particular community adopting individualistic and associational norms, values, perspectives or identities. A modern system is associated with adjectives such as being new, modern or up-to-date. Its features include individualistic relationships, urban and rural-based population and a cultural life that is based on rules/laws instituted by a centralized government. These features contradict the traditional system with a rural-based population having cultural life regulated by customary law (Fair, 1982, p.1). The underlying assumption of those subscribing to modernization of societies is that closely-knit communities are underdeveloped (Tipps, 1973, p.213). For that reason, urbanization, industrialization and increased use of technology are construed as indicators of a society that has experienced transition from traditional to modern. This seems to be Tonnies' point when he argued that the demise of close face-to-face communities was championed by industrialization leading to changes in patterns of social relationships and social networks.

Ever since the 1890s, the Shona village communities have experienced transformation from kinship into heterogeneous populace in which villages became principally organized along political and religious

affiliations (Bourdillon, 1987, p.23). It is therefore the responsibility of modern communities in transition to harness the merits of transition to promote their well-being.

Similarly, evolutionary transition, another feature of unplanned events, is premised on the idea that societies gradually experience transformation over time in terms of their social, economics, politics and culture (Fair, 1982, p.28; Willis, 2005, p.118). The evolutionary school is attributed to Emile Durkheim. A classic example of evolutionary transition was the gradual change of societies from hunting and food gathering to cattle herding and land cultivation (Garlake, 1983, p.3, 13). This kind of change is construed as gradual and therefore is popularly understood as evolutionary transition. North *et al* (2009, p.90) bundles modernization and evolutionary transition together when they argued that there are three subsequent transitional social organization patterns that characterize the history of humankind. These include foraging communities which survived on hunting, kingdom states in which individuals and groups lived as closely-knit communities under clan leadership and the modern state which is characterized cash economy, individualistic political and social identities. In all these different features of transition, different patterns of behaviours and beliefs are engendered in the process (North *et al.*, 2009, p.91). That being the case, it is therefore possible to construct changes in patterns of social organizations that support conflict, peace and perpetuates violence. The aim of this study is to construct how transition shape conflict, peace or violence in order to situate the peacebuilding potential at the disposal of communities in transition.

In some quarters, development is perceived as one of the features of transition of communities (Fair, 1982, p.6; Willis, 2005, p.2). Development has come to be understood as a multi-dimensional process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of social groups which result in changes in institutional and social structures, attitudes, beliefs and customs (Goulet, undated). Adams (2002, p.47) points out that change in patterns of social organizational in communities that experienced colonialism became revolutionary. Adams (2002, p.47) and Willis (2005, p.118) argue that where the development continuum roped in colonialism cultural domination was not limited to simple impositions of the will of the foreign power, but it [colonialism] offered itself as the best option able to fulfil the interests of the native populace. In many respects, the colonial masters propagated development under the auspices of urbanization, education or Christianity. Thus, change involving social structures, attitudes, beliefs, norms and values gradually and radically occurred when the dominant cultural group continued to dominate the natives in such a way that their ideas [those of the dominant cultural group] were construed as natural and inevitable (Fair, 1982, p.6).

Haverkort *et al* (2003, p.25) point out that all communities are susceptible to external domination and argue that communities faced with pressure from external forces such as colonialism respond differently. Some communities reject cultural or political domination others tolerate, while others still situate themselves at the middle of rejection and tolerant. Countries now called Cameroon, Nigeria, South Africa or Zimbabwe are classic examples of communities that rejected domination culminating into protracted conflicts.

Haverkort *et al* (2003, p.25) noted that: “in traditional societies that are dominated by foreign culture one can observe underground systems of traditional value systems and leadership which guide the decisions of rural people.” These developments are in tandem with observations by Poplin (1972). He argues that when confronted with unplanned change communities make efforts to modify life patterns with a view to achieve desirable goals for themselves (1972, p.233). This suggests that communities have the capacity to initiate and realise their aspirations even when confronted with forces of unplanned change.

In Zimbabwe, the perpetual existence of the Shona institution *matare emhosva*, despite the dominance of the Roman Dutch law of conflict resolution since the 1890s, is a classic example of the existence of an underground system. The phenomenon among the Shona fell squarely with observations by Haverkort *et al* (2003, p.26) that some communities, when faced with external domination can adopt a revivalist approach in which the past may be considered as remedial to the perceived social, political, economic and cultural ills perpetuated by an external force. They warned that fundamentalist reaction by communities experiencing external pressure should not be confused with revivalist, as fundamentalist reaction has the propensity to compromising prospects for improvements resulting from hybridization and complementarity of different systems. Haverkort *et al* seem to be of the idea that although transition has some negative affects it also has some positives elements which can help to improve the community undergoing transformation. They suggested that adaptability to a constantly changing environment can be more enriching and creates room for improvement.

3.2.1 Transitions, peace and conflict

The Philippines provide a classical example of how communities experiencing unplanned change can initiate and realise their aspirations. In the Philippines, zones of peace were created under the aegis of a violent political transition from the mid 1980s. Avruch and Jose (2007, p.52) noted that zones of peace were aimed at promoting peaceful co-existence, tolerance, cordial harmony, self-reliance and enhancement of livelihoods of local citizens. In Colombia, peace communities were created to address violent political system in 1997. Svahn (2011, p.13) argue that peace communities were aimed at charting

a better and preferred peaceful future under the aegis of a violent political transition in Colombia in the 1990s.

In the recent past, in 2000, Robert Putman also emphasized that in the contemporary world, social capital which governs close face-to-face communities and also essential for sustaining networks was in a state of decline. Putman (1995) defines social capital as “networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.” Gowar (2014, p.17) emphasizes the extent to which social capital has declined resulting in the emergence of individualistic and civic-dis-engagement. He highlighted the emergence of new identities, bonds and activities in modern communities as an indicator of communities in transition. Due to this decline, close face-to-face social relationships have become so critical to instilling values of respect, co-existence, and tolerance which buttress peacebuilding at community level.

Industrialization and urbanization have been identified as drivers of transition in communities (Gowar, 2014, p.18). North *et al* (2009, p.91) emphasize that communities experiencing a transition engender different patterns of behaviour...” Conflictual and violent behaviour are some of the major behavioural patterns that have characterized communities in transition. This means that communities undergoing transitional phases have a dire need for continuous peacebuilding initiatives because conflict, violence and peace are residual elements which are strongly attached to community life.

Transition is a strong force which affects community life both positively and negatively and it also provokes both conflict and violence (North *et al.*, 2009, p.90). In communities, the most obvious victims of violence and conflict are mostly ordinary people. As such, while violence and conflict affect almost every individual and groups in a community experiencing transition, there are certain groups who are more affected than others. Women, girls and children carry the heaviest brunt of violence. In addition, while almost everyone in a conflict-ravaged community or village suffers violence and conflict, it should be noted that violence is habitually indiscriminate; it is almost without regard to race, status, sex or age. From this, it is violence that this study refers to as external force for communities undergoing transition because it usually comes in different forms and magnitudes.

Lederach (1997, p.39) points out that conflict affect the entire population of a nation whenever it erupts but evidence seems to suggest that individuals and groups in communities undergoing transition often do not face violence lying down. Historically, there are individuals such as Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Junior, who resisted violence to the extent possible using methods such as speeches, sit-ins and non-

violent marches. Lemanski (2008, p.396) praises informal community organizations in the Apartheid of South Africa as game-changers when the country was experiencing political turmoil. During this period, informal community organizations in South Africa stood out as having a notable challenge that subverted the political system of the day. One such grassroots initiative was the street committees. Street committees were focusing on bread and butter issues, “material needs” as Lemanski (2008, p.396) puts it. Street committees emerged from townships representing the aspirations of the poorest of the poor in South Africa.

Another grassroots initiative called community development forums emerged and it involved those people who were living in suburbs comprising of rate-payers. The anti-Apartheid movements traced their roots from people at the grassroots, who reacted against what they perceived as peace challenges in their townships and they registered discontent through organized protests, marches and boycotts to lobby and force government to address issues that were affecting their well-being. Taken together, these efforts in captured the attention of the unjust system of Apartheid. Civic movements negotiated for the people’s interests and needs, thus affirming the important role of grassroots in championing their shared interests and needs during a transition period. Lemanski (2008, p.395) concludes that these self-organized grassroots groups provided the poor and the marginalized a window of opportunity to secure a voice for themselves when South Africa was undergoing a political transition. Thus, in South Africa, it was the grassroots efforts that waged the most effective struggle against Apartheid in townships and villages (Lemanski, 2008, p.395).

In the then Southern Rhodesia, transition was characterized by a protracted conflict in which guerrillas, an off-shoot of people at the grassroots, waged a struggle against the colonial government. In the transition experienced by some Arab countries in 2011, individuals and groups at the grassroots contested structural violence through protests, sit-ins and marches. The aim of these self-organized grassroots groups were to secure a voice against state neglect and structural violence. From these examples, it is clear that communities have the capacity of becoming a formidable force. With shared commitment and interests, they can stand against forces such as violent political systems as was the case in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia or in some Arab countries such as Egypt, Libya or Tunisia, which experienced transitions of various proportions and magnitude. This supports the notion that transition can be a driver for positive change.

The foregoing discussion indicates that whatever the determinants of transition, communities are the most affected when social, economic, political and cultural transformation takes place in a particular country.

Nevertheless, there are communities across the globe that have experienced transitional phases characterized by violent political systems like Kenya, Colombia, Philippines and northern Somaliland but have been able to exploit to their advantage peaceable resources and this has increasingly helped to build capacities for these communities to transit from violence to peace.

3.2.2 Communities transiting from violence to peace

This section explores the question of whether and under what conditions can a violent/post-violent community become peaceful? Local communities that utilized resources at their disposal to take responsibility of their own peace include: the Wajir district of Kenya, San Jose de Apartado of Colombia, five places in Philippines, and northern Somaliland.

3.2.2.1 The Wajir peace and development committee, Kenya

Wajir is a district in Kenya with individuals and groups who suffered indiscriminate violence as a result of tribal tensions. Historically, conflict in this district has always been a major feature between pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. By the early 1990s, conflict in Wajir had grown out of proportion to the extent that women from different rival groups could fight each other every now and then especially at market places (Adan and PKalya, 2006; Odendaal, 2010, p.39).

Elfversson (2011, p.16) points out that in the 1990s, conflict and violence in Wajir resulted from competition for political power, underdevelopment, hunger, marginalization, and an influx of refugees from neighbouring Somalia and Ethiopia. She notes that as clan fighting continued in the district and militia groups and mercenaries proliferating, these developments led to unprecedented levels of violence and normal life at community level was largely disrupted. Women and other vulnerable groups suffered violence and community life was in disarray. Members of the community lost their daily fortunes, livelihoods were disrupted and entrepreneurial activities obstructed. Life became unbearable, as community networks lay dormant and most importantly local government were proving weak, dysfunctional and ill-equipped to address peace challenges affecting the well-being of Wajir communities. Simply put, local state institutions seemed incapacitated to remedy conditions bedevilling this disrupted community and because of this, the situation degenerated into a complex emergency in which banditry and looting by militant groups became the order of the day.

Faced with such precarious situations, some women in the Wajir district teamed up and formed coalitions in their endeavour to restore normal life. These women invoked existing social networks to defend their livelihoods as they lobbied for negotiations between warring parties. Elfversson (2011, p.16) asserts that

these women teamed up with clan elders that were respected members of the Wajir community to mediate the conflict between warring parties. This development bred the Wajir peace group. She notes that by 1993, efforts made by women and respectable clan elders yielded the much needed results leading to the establishment of a declaration for peace. Subsequently, the Wajir peace group was later transformed into Wajir peace and development committee. From the outset, the Wajir peace and development committee has contributed significantly in mitigating violence in communities through peace education programmes, in-house education and training of local people in conflict and peace issues (Adan and PKalya, 2006, p.13). The case of the Wajir peace and development committee marked an important shift for communities who had relied on top-bottom approaches to peace issues. Thus, Wajir community is a shining example and will always be remembered for being able to foster inward-looking peace initiatives amidst state diminishing capacities to addressing peace challenges bedevilling local people.

Elfversson (2011, p.16) argues that the success of the Wajir peace initiative was determined by a number of factors. The major ones were firstly, the process was inclusive involving women, youth, business community and traditional leadership. The second factor was that the initiative was a brain child of local people in Wajir, who had first-hand experience of the conflict and violence and for that reason community members took responsibility of their own peacebuilding using their own local capacities and resources. Thirdly, the consultative cooperation involving the Wajir peace and development committee and local government representatives contributed significantly to the success of the initiative in the district, as local traditional conflict resolution and contemporary mechanisms were integrated together and therefore complemented each other. Simply put, traditional and state institutions were perceived as complementary and this led to the restoration of a safe and secure environment for the Wajir community. As evidence suggests, when local people come together to address peace challenges bedevilling their well-being, perpetrators of violence and conflict wearied and provided an incentive for this formidable group to achieve the aspirations of the community. The principles of consensus decision-making, restoration of social relationships and stability through dialogue employed by the Wajir peace initiative have inspired the contemporary world. The seeds of peace were sown and nurtured and this has send a positive signal to communities currently suffering violence to consider taking responsibility on their own by first having inward-looking strategies, an alternative to macro-driven peacebuilding.

In many respects, the major achievements by the Wajir initiative are that the initiative has helped to defuse long standing tensions between erstwhile enemies because resolving conflict is a critical component of peacebuilding. In addition, in a community where stock theft was rampant, this peace committee took the responsibility to hold offenders responsible, reducing crime rate and thus, in some

sense it helped to promote peace in the Wajir district (Adan and PKalya, 2006, pp.13-15). For people in Wajir, peace was understood as living in an environment free from theft, banditry, fear and women having access to the markets and exchanging goods and experiencing a quality of life characterized by cordial harmony and the improvement of livelihoods. It was these aspirations that drove the Wajir community to foster inward-looking peace initiatives to confront peace challenges head-on and as a collective community, thus, their aspirations were realized.

3.2.2.2 The Peace community of San Jose de Apartado, Colombia

The San Jose de Apartado community in Colombia faced something almost similar to Wajir but in a different context. In the 1960s, a small town called San Jose de Apartado was born out of extreme violent conflict that had affected communities. In this small town, communities went through hard times characterized by violence and conflict perpetrated by Colombian military and paramilitary groups. Svahn (2011, p.13) points out that this community suffered massacres, displacement, houses were burnt down, agricultural activities disrupted, murders and rapes were perpetrated by militant groups. He reported that about 560 cases of attacks occurred and 165 murder cases were recorded. In spite of the fact that the situation was continuing to deteriorate, efforts by government to address these peace challenges were a mirage.

Historically, communities in San Jose de Apartado were known for working as a collective in spite of robberies and murder cases which bred divisions and fragmentation. However, a coalition by San Jose de Apartado communities began in 1997 with the establishment of a peace community to help address the problem of murder and robberies that were affecting their everyday lives. This coalition was guided by the principles of participation, respect for diversity, respect for the freedom of individuals and dialoguing. The coalition was characterized by co-operation, oneness and solidarity between members of the community (Svahn, 2011, p.12). The launch of the coalition was characterized by a seven-point declaration of which the major points of the declaration were:

- Community members were forbidden from carrying arms, ammunition and explosives;
- Community members were forbidden from participating in the on-going conflict in Colombia;
- Colombian military and paramilitary groups were demanded to set their foot in San Jose de Apartado communities and were expected to respect this demand.

These declarations were meant to enhance the peace consciousness of San Jose de Apartado communities and to ensure that their community was not going to provide any support to the on-going conflict. Thus, while Colombian military and paramilitary groups were involved in fighting and perpetuating violence, community members mobilized themselves against violent activities and declared their communities a

zone of peace. By declaring their community a zone of peace, they were suggesting that their territory was to become a violence-free zone.

According to them, peace involved unity, ability to plant food, ability to come together and work as a collective, and it also involved having their daily food on the table (Courtheyn, 2015). On the basis of their understanding of peace it appears that, by declaring their community a zone of peace, they were coming from an experience of the horrors of violence that it divides people, disrupts their farming activities, and disrupts family life, social network as well as the disruption of sources of their daily food. This conceptualization of peace confirms Lederach's (1997, p.20) conception that "peace is a social construct." For this community anything that threatened their farming activities, and disrupted their daily activities such as working in their vegetable gardens, securing daily food stuffs was perceived as a threat to peace in the San Jose de Apartado community. Within this framework, members of the community formed a coalition which came to be known as the peace community.

Svahn (2011,p.11) notes that during the initial stages of the peace community in 1997, participation of women was undervalued not until after three months when women began to be accorded equal opportunities and responsibilities in the peace communities. As time progressed, the peace consciousness was caught up by other communities resulting in the establishment of over 50 peace communities in Colombia. As Svahn (2011, p.13) puts it "together these communities constitute a strong bottom-up initiative to peace in Colombia and a hope for a more peaceful situation in the country." Meanwhile, the peace community of San Jose de Apartado has received the Aachen Peace Prize and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as a success story and an inspiration for the entire globe in which non-violent methods were employed to address peace challenges with subsequent positive results. These peace communities are examples of the struggle by people at grassroots to resist violence and conflict that is a result of outside influence with a view to charting a better and preferred peaceful future for their communities. The question is what factors contributed to the establishment of peace communities in Colombia?

3.2.2.3 Factors that contributed to peace communities in San Jose de Apartado

While it may not be ascertained exactly as to which success factors may have contributed to the establishment of the initial and subsequent peace community in 1997, there is, however, information that helps to provide hints. For example, San Jose de Apartado is a small community comprising of about 1, 300 farmers. As a community of farmers, they cherished working together by organizing work parties and inculcated the values of solidarity through collective farming (Courtheyn, 2015). These people loved to

work in groups, a practice which they derived from their tradition called *convite* which is translated to mean family work group. Since these people survive on farming it makes great sense for them to come together and organize work parties in order to produce higher yields which in turn sustains their households. This practice is common among communities that survive on farming. In rural Shona communities, for example, work parties are still being practiced, albeit in a modernized way. These work parties form the basis for social cohesion and mutual policing among the Shona. However, communities in the San Jose de Apartado city fostered inward-looking peacebuilding strategies and exploited their ability to work as a collective unity and channelled collective unity to addressing peace challenges that were affecting their communities. They established a peace community. Evidence of this example's success was seen on 23 March 2015, when San Jose de Apartado peace community celebrated 18 years of achieving a violence-free zone. This celebration was done in light of hiccups and disturbances perpetuated by government security forces and paramilitary groups in which eight people were massacred in 2005 in San Jose de Apartado (Courtheyn, 2015). Thus, it can be concluded that the inward-looking peace initiative has contributed significantly towards the setting up a peaceful community in San Jose de Apartado.

Another possible success factor was their sense of autonomy. Autonomy is one of the critical values that has historically characterized the life of San Jose de Apartado community, which continued to cherish this value (Courtheyn, 2015). Courtheyn (2015) points out that community members in San Jose de Apartado rejected donations from government, thus embracing inward-looking and autonomy as alternative strategies to government-led initiatives. For instance, at one point, the government donated agricultural seeds to them and they declined the offer. Regarding government support for them, when Courtheyn (2015) interviewed them, one member of this community was quoted as saying: "what we want is not to depend upon the state. We want to have our own crops, food and our own education." These words indicate that this community believed that they had a right to achieve their aspirations and so they fostered inward-looking strategies as an alternative means of achieving their aspirations.

In addition, another success factor in the San Jose de Apartado community was that these people were known for believing that perfect conditions do not exist on earth. Thus, they were determined to do everything within their power to face adversity in order to achieve their aspirations. Creativity was one of their esteemed values, especially when faced with adversity and thus they embraced creativity in order to turn conditions perceived as bad into better ones. What this suggests is that people in San Jose de Apartado were not pessimists rather they believed that every positive action breeds positive results. Thus,

when confronted with a problem that seemed to threaten their livelihoods they were quick to act in order to change the perceived misfortunes into fortunes.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that what people believe if put into practice can be instrumental to the realization of their aspirations, thus, enhancing the notion that communities have the capacity to take upon themselves the responsibility to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003, p.210) emphasized that “where the government failed to provide [basic services], the people resorted to self-help development efforts.” Orvis (2001, p.30) defines self-help groups as informal groups comprising of members of the local community who mobilizes each other for purposes of addressing challenges affecting their local communities. These groups are independent from the state. They can come together for purposes of donating cash to construct or refurbish a dilapidated classroom block, or donations of labour for some particular activities. Orvis praises self-help groups for attracting the attention of some political leaders owing to their involvement in a variety of community-development projects. This was true of the Wajir of Kenya, San Jose de Apartado of Colombia and zones of peace in Philippines.

3.2.2.4 Zones of peace in the Philippines

Avruch and Jose (2007, p.52) examined the emergence of the phenomenon of zones of peace in the Philippines following the eruption of violent conflict. From their perspective, zones of peace are bottom-up initiatives that depict local activism and empowerment. They highlighted that zones of peace in the Philippines can be traced back to September 1988, when a declaration in Naga city was made by a group of community members, code-named a zone of peace, Freedom and Neutrality.

Subsequently, there were other formations of zones of peace in places such as Sagada, November 1988; Tabuk, April 1989; Bituan, November 1989; and Cantomanyog, February 1990 (Avruch and Jose, 2007, p.52). Avruch and Jose (2007) noted that each of these zones of peace was prompted by contextual events which differed significantly. While each zone of peace experienced its own success and obstacles, they however, shared similar characteristics namely:

- A zone of peace was a specified geographical area, which could be a village, district or region in which residents declares it a violence free zone;
- The declaration was the outcome of community groups with a peacebuilding agenda;
- Activities and programmes are sustained by community groups resident in the zone (Avruch and Jose, 2007, p.52).

Zones of peace were not only aimed at rejecting violent conflict in their areas of jurisdiction, as Avruch and Jose (2007, p.52) pointed out, they were aimed at addressing social justice, human rights, corruption issues by promoting peaceful co-existence, tolerance, cordial harmony, self-reliance and enhancement of livelihoods of local citizens. However, of primary importance to zones of peace was that they were “established by local communities wanting to protect their residents from violence of armed conflict. Communities would declare those areas as off-limits to armed operations by both side of the conflict” (Avruch and Jose, 2007, p.54). Thus the proliferation of zones of peace was witnessed throughout the Philippines in the late 1980s and they made impacts of various proportions.

For example, in Sagada, where the first zone of peace was established, they banned alcohol, and sanctioned their members to respect cultural norms and values. Such declarations were a result of concerted efforts by various stakeholders such as religious groups, civil society, traditional leaders and municipal representatives in Sagada. Owing to such declarations, there was a marked difference in the reduction of cases of violence in Sagada by 1988. To compliment the success of the zone of peace in Sagada in promoting peace, the government of Philippines offered a special development fund to the community there.

Subsequently, the influence of the Sagada zone of peace made headway in Cantomanyog in February 1990, and the phenomenon of zones of peace turned into a formidable force which sprouted into various places in the Philippines and were continuing to grow (Avruch and Jose, 2007, p.55). Albers (2012, p.34) reviewed zones of peace in Mindanao in southern Philippines with a view to assess how communities caught in crossfire, living in fear, mistrust, terrorism, banditry and domestic violence perpetrated by militant groups have managed to re-group to declare their community a violence free zone. She highlights that the armed conflict in the 1970s involving government troops against Muslim militant groups left 60 000 dead and displaced millions of people, destroying the livelihoods of local people and worst still antagonism between Muslims and Christians persisted, causing further deterioration of the livelihoods of people. However, she notes that, in response to these precarious conditions, local community members in Mindanao mobilized themselves and formed a zone of peace. The formation of a zone of peace was a public event and declarations were made at a public forum organized by the community members themselves.

Albers (2012, p.34) argues that activities that helped to support and consolidate the zones of peace in Mindanao include among others, leadership trainings, conflict resolution workshops to sensitize community members and encouraging them to make use of dialogue as a way of addressing conflict and

livelihood development workshops and trainings. As a result, it so happened in some other areas, whether by design or default, that the influence of zones of peace drew some militant groups into becoming stakeholders of zones of peace. A classic example of a zone of peace that drew militant groups was in Nalapan, in which violence was reported to have significantly decreased owing to this development. From this, it can be concluded that zones of peace can become one of the more effective mechanisms of building peace in conflict ravaged communities.

Albers (2012, p.35) applauded the success of peace zones in Mindanao in that they managed to engage armed groups into negotiations to end violence in the area, however, she noted that zones of peace experienced a number of setbacks. Firstly, she argued that zones of peace were dependent on voluntary participation of the local people. Secondly, zones of peace did not have official recognition from governments because these initiatives were championed by ordinary people without political affiliations. Thirdly, the successes of zones of peace were heavily anchored on promises kept by community members and warring parties to avoid fighting in the declared zones. Fourthly, peace zones did not have influence on peace processes at a national level. The point by Albers was that these zones of peace were informal, meaning to say they were building on local community networks and thus, they had no legal protection. However, Albers' (2012, p.34) insights are pivotal and provide a basis upon which the contributions of zones of peace in addressing peace challenges affecting local communities can be gleaned. The bottom line was that local communities successfully made concerted efforts to address problems that were affecting them and their aspirations were realized at the end.

In addition, Becker and Schall (2009, p.2) pointed out that in the late 1980s, another zone of peace was formed in northern Luzon, Philippines. They highlighted that this formation came amidst insurgency and counter-insurgency between communities and government troops. Further, local communities in Luzon persuaded militant groups and government forces to stay out of their place. Following the success of the zone of peace in Luzon, there was a heightened proliferation of zones of peace in conflict ravaged areas in Philippines.

For example, in Carmen and Cotabato, communities had long suffered violence resulting from fighting between government troops and rebels groups. However, as a result of grassroots initiatives by civic organizations which were aimed at addressing poverty, hunger and livelihoods restoration activities, local community members formed a zone of peace. Owing to the zone of peace in Carmen, a number of zones of peace were established between Muslims, indigenous people, the Moros and Christians and fighting between these different religious groups came to halt (Becker and Schall, 2009, p.4). Zones of peace bred

peace committees which comprised of Muslims, Christians and the Moros. Owing to the establishment of peace committees and livelihoods restoration programmes, peace was sustained in both Carmen and Cotabato (Becker and Schall, 2009, p.5). As time progressed these peace committees, which initially comprised of ordinary people, ended up having local government representatives collaborating with local people in the implementation of agreed solutions to addressing peace challenges that were affecting their communities. Peace committees were also involved in livelihoods development that centred on income-generating projects and offered support to agricultural activities, especially food production (Becker and Schall, 2009, p.6).

It is clear from this discussion that the establishment of zones of peace were a result of local communities that took responsibility of their own peace. Anyanwu (1992) (cited in Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003, p.199) concludes that “the habit of self-help is a prerequisite for survival in the modern world.” Thus, the formation of zones of peace follows the trait of communities wanting to take responsibility for their own peace in order to survive and achieve their aspirations. This clarifies the rising trend in peacebuilding in which some communities invoke their cultural resources in order to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. The northern Somaliland is a fitting example of this model.

3.2.2.5 The Guurti council in northern Somaliland

The origin of the conflict in northern Somaliland was associated with events that took place in the 1960s. After independence from British colonialism, the two Somali territories merged to become United Somali state. Notably, due to political disturbances, Said Barre assumed power through a coup in 1969 (Ahmed and Green, 1999, p.116) and political hostility continued to grip United Somali especially in the 1970s. In 1974-75, northern Somaliland experienced famine which claimed about 2,000 deaths and forced about 15 per cent of the victims into relief camps.

Subsequently, in 1978, an attempted coup was foiled and this insurgency caused a further deterioration of relations within already strained relations between factions. This attempted coup took place in an environment which was characterized by hunger, under-development, tension and political instability. Owing to the unabated famine and hunger that invaded the United Somali state, by 1979, about 1.3 million people officially became refugees and half of them were settled in northern Somaliland.

As if that was not enough, in the 1980s, a civil war erupted between government and opposition groups claiming about 100,000 lives. The majority of victims were from northern Somaliland. Ahmed and Green (1999, p.119) argued that most of the attacks were targeting rural people, mostly cattle herders and

farmers and they poisoned wells and seizing livestock, burnt down houses, thus destroying the means of livelihood of rural people in northern Somaliland. Owing to these developments, crops and livestock production dwindled drastically, and this situation bred banditry. United Somali became a war zone. This civil war reached peak especially between 1991 and 1992 and was further compounded by a famine that killed between 300,000 and 500,000 leaving three million in abject poverty. It was this era that marked the demise of Said Barre's regime and his ultimate downfall in 1991 resulting in the conflict-ravaged United Somali splitting into two states: the north and south. The northerners came to be known as the Republic of Somaliland (*ibid.*).

This era witnessed unprecedented levels of banditry, hunger and starvation in already disrupted and declining political, economic and social systems in both Somalis. Paradoxically, at the height of a disrupted and declining political system in 1991, the *akils*, popularly known as traditional elders, *guurti* (the traditional council of elders), chiefs and religious leaders came together and invoked traditional institutions in their endeavour to address peace challenges perceived to have gripped their communities in the Republic of Somaliland (Ahmed and Green, 1999, p.119). As argued by Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003, p.199) "self-help initiatives enable the people to look inwards by rallying local resources and efforts." Thus, the council of elders fostered inward-looking peace initiatives as an alternative strategy to the peace challenges in their communities.

In 1992, the *guurti* organized a peace conference comprising of inter-clan warring parties across northern Somaliland. According to Lederach (1995, p.97), the peace conference was "an open, multiple and cross-clan ... forum [characterized by] public meetings, marked by lengthy oratory speeches and extensive use of poetry." At this peace conference, clans that participated were urged to take responsibility of their own peace in their areas of jurisdiction. In that sense, the council of elders promoted autonomy, self-determination and co-existence between erstwhile clan groups.

Lederach (1995, p.98), in his assessment of peace conferences, notes that there were two major positive developments that took place. The first involved the transformation of proceedings from a forum characterized by oral deliberations to a written agreement involving erstwhile enemies. Second, a joint community committee comprising of 30 members was created with three key resolutions. The first resolution declared that the joint committee was to preside over all conflicts occurring within the territory. The second resolution improvised strategies of addressing conflicts especially with regards to the restoration of properties stolen to its rightful owner(s), the payment of compensation to the injured victim and the denouncing of taking take revenge by victims. The third and final resolution declared that the

aggrieved party was to report their cases to the joint committee rather than to take matters in their own hands. Lederach (1995, p.98) notes that following these resolutions, peace conferences expanded from district, regional to national spheres. These resolutions gave communities the responsibility to take care of their own peace and thus, enhancing the inward-looking peacebuilding strategy.

Lederach (1997, p.53) points out that initially, the council of elders was established as a forum which was aimed at discussing problem issues, violence in particular, affecting their communities by a small group of concerned elders. However, this small group of elders grew into a peace conference which turned into a grand peace conference that drew large crowds of people from different parts of Somaliland. Farah (2001, p.143) notes that these peace conferences translated into a peacebuilding framework and they helped to restrain levels of inter-clan strife, fighting, freelance banditry and violence in the country. He says that: “the return to tried and tested system of governance has enabled Somalis’ in the north to break the momentum of war...” (ibid., p.143) and thus communities there were able to realize their aspirations. The tried and tested systems of governance were social norms and values that were bent on promoting co-existence, social harmony, tolerance and non-violent resolution of conflict. These peaceable social norms and values represented the tried and tested wisdom and they were indeed critical components for peacebuilding in Somaliland. Thus, the intervention by the *guurti* fostered inward-looking strategies and it turned out into a viable alternative peacebuilding strategy.

In peacebuilding discourse, traditional leadership play an important role in promoting peace since they are in constant contact with people and they are respected in their host communities. Thus, the involvement of elders in the transition from violence to peace in northern Somaliland was a major milestone because it represented an inward-looking, bottom-up approach. Farah and Lewis (1997, p.350) notes that the bottom-up approach initiated by the council of elders contributed to peace in northern Somaliland in that the initiative started at grassroots level, then to district and regional levels and played a mid-wifely role leading to the formation of an interim government. Owing to this initiative, community members were able to work together for the common good and the *guurti* council was hailed for fostering inward-looking peace initiative in the transition from violence to peace in northern Somaliland.

3.2.3 Lessons to draw from efforts by communities to achieve peace

From the above case studies from Kenya, Colombia, the Philippines and Somaliland, local communities positioned themselves as peace builders and violence-resisters amidst violent conflict engendered by political transitional phases. Communities in these countries did not wait for the situation to get better first but rather, against all odds, they took the initiative. Communities played their part by taking initiatives to mobilize each other on the basis that violence had destroyed life, it had divided people, had

shuttered trust and existing networks and relationships and that violence was responsible for under-development in Somaliland and Wajir district in Kenya. These initiatives indicate that communities in Somaliland, Wajir, Colombia or the Philippines were not taking pleasure in the violent conflict which had devastated community life neither were communities sympathetic with warring parties. The important thing to note is that in each case various stakeholders were engaged and this seems to be one of the success factors that could have led to relative success stories in Kenya, Colombia, the Philippines and Somaliland.

On the question of effectiveness, there are at least two possible reasons for the success of peace initiatives during on-going conflict. The first could be attributed to the idea that local communities had an inward-looking perspective and therefore they felt obliged to take the responsibility to address peace challenges. In spite of their limitations, they made notable successes. During the initial stages of these peace initiatives, community members mobilized each other to ensure a common concern and vision and they charted a better and a preferred peaceful future. The second was buy-in from some conflicting parties who were directly perpetuating violence as was the case in Kenya and the Philippines. These buy-ins cautioned communities to achieve their objectives. Overall, these peace initiatives started tiny, then turned into formidable forces which sprouted and grew making their influence felt even beyond the borders of their communities despite challenges that they lacked official recognition from their incumbent state authorities.

Other factors that could have contributed include among others that for some of the perpetrators of violence in the case of Wajir district and Somaliland they seem to have been moved by the fact that community members had resorted to taking the route of compromise and accommodation. In the case of the Philippines and Colombia, some militant groups relinquished and avoid operations in the declared zone of peace and incidentally, violent activities were mitigated when some warring parties took a second thought about engaging in violent activities. For the community these second thoughts turned out into great achievements and thus, the community galvanized their nonviolent campaign against violence and made marked differences. Instead of the community suffering violence and conflict passively, they mobilized themselves, invoked their local capacities and networks with a view to addressing peace challenges affecting their well-being. Their aspirations were realized. Communities in Wajir, Colombia, the Philippines and Somaliland took these routes.

Although these peace initiatives were started by small groups of ordinary people, in some scenarios they were able to draw the attention of the government's representatives especially in the Wajir district and the

Philippines, when some militant groups were recruited into becoming full peacebuilders. Thus, local communities proved indispensable for the success of grassroots peacebuilding. However, it is important to point out as Avruch and Jose (2007, p.63) note, that cohesion among the various zones of peace and peace committees in the Philippines were drawn from various sources of power. The major sources of power were tradition and Christianity which helped in providing frameworks for conflict resolution activities. Another key aspect that contributed to cohesion was traditional leadership. In almost every zone of peace or peace committee, traditional leadership played an important role in legitimizing local activities. The involvement of women also contributed significantly to the success of locally-based peace initiatives especially in Wajir. The Wajir initiative was started by a small group of women who mobilized each other and together they teamed up with traditional leadership and they became a formidable force for peace.

Apart from that, the involvement of civic organizations in providing financial and technical support through education and training, livelihoods restoration programmes and other programmes was also a key factor in the successes of zones of peace and peace communities. Although, government was not fully involved in the initial stages of the formation of zones of peace in the Philippines, however, about seven zones of peace received financial support from government. This financial support demonstrated government involvement and endorsement of locally-based initiatives (Avruch and Jose, 2007, p.64). In the Wajir peace committee, government transformed informal peace committees into formal peace committees and this development served as an endorsement of locally based peace initiatives as noble and worth recognition and support (Odendaal, 2010, p.40). Avruch and Jose (2007, p.65-6) conclude that these cases studies “may be viewed as a representation of a community’s decision to assert its sovereignty over other existing political forces in the country.” The key element in all these cases studies is the trend by various communities to promote cohesion which is one of the critical factors that put communities at a better place to build peace in spite of external forces.

In all these scenarios, individual members of differing communities institutionalized their resistance through the establishment of community development forums, street committees, peace committees, and zones of peace as they are popularly known, to attract as much attention as possible to the perpetrators of violence, community members at large and their incumbent governments. It seemed that the more individuals and communities formed these informal forums/structures of resistance to violence, the more determined these communities were that a preferred peaceful future was realized. Elfversson (2011) concludes that initiatives by communities experiencing transition have played a crucial role in ameliorating the burden of dysfunctional or weak state institutions on the lives of ordinary people. Thus,

common trends in many remote parts of the globe where state institutions by design or default seem incapable of mediating peace challenges bedevilling vulnerable communities have tended to develop their own peace initiatives. Lemanski (2008, p.408) sees common struggle and internal bonds/cohesion as strengths that demonstrates capacities by local community members to address challenges affecting its well-being and concludes that these elements determines whether a community can successfully confront the state for its inability to provide basic services or succumb to state fragility and deteriorate. He suggests that in the event that a community lacks the capacity to address its own problems external support becomes inevitable.

To this end, several key lessons can be gleaned from the above case studies. The first lesson relates to the significance of communities in peacebuilding. Communities are primary stakeholders in peacebuilding if sustainable peacebuilding is to be achieved because they have the resources at their disposal. In the case of Colombia, Somalia and Kenya, communities there made use of locally-based resources such as social networks, existing structures, peaceable social norms and values and these became building blocks for their peacebuilding endeavours.

The second lesson has to do with community participation and involvement in peacebuilding initiatives. In all the cases above, community members themselves spearheaded initiatives. In Somaliland, Colombia, Wajir and Philippines communities were involved in the design and implementation of peacebuilding intervention. In these scenarios, each individual community had an in-depth internal asset-mapping and mobilization of its own strengths which involved the skills and expertise of elderly people and women. In all cases, community involvement also helped to reduce violence in the long run as communities took ownership of the process and played their part by bringing whatever skills and expertise they had to the fore. From the Philippines' experience community involvement and use of existing structures and social networks were pivotal to peacebuilding at local level.

Thirdly, it can be learnt that some governments are ready to form a partnership with communities that can prove to having the capability to take responsibility of their own peace. The sub-contract between community members and government in Colombia, the Philippines and Wajir peace group in Kenya facilitated effective partnership leading to the achievement of peace. In essence, this collaboration helped to strengthen community capacity, which zones of peace in the Philippines, Colombia and Wajir peace group alone could not have achieved on their own. Using these case studies, it can be argued that community peacebuilding can potentially provide a safety blanket for communities experiencing violent conflict. These examples make a strong case that communities can actually be peaceful even after they

have been exposed and experienced violence. Having said this, the discussion now turns to look at features and trends of peacebuilding mechanisms by communities in the contemporary world.

3.3 Section Two: Features and trends of peacebuilding mechanisms

The emerging trends for peacebuilding mechanisms at local community levels are sport/football events, entrepreneurial activities and LPCs. I have analysed each of these mechanisms below in order to establish the extent to which each of mechanism helped to promote and sustain peace at local community levels.

3.3.1 Sport

Sport is undeniably the most fashionable leisure activity across the globe which absorbs all age groups, various sectors and sexes within a community, and its dividends are many, among which include, upholding self-esteem, physical and mental fitness (Kvalsund, 2007, 1,7). Kvalsund (2007, p.5) notes that sport is a double-edged sword in that on one hand, it can provide space for joy, fun, creativity and happiness. All these aspects can potentially turn out to become vehicles and low cost opportunities for peacebuilding. On the other, it has the potential to create an environment that can degenerate rage, frustration and sadness. However, this study is interested with the peacebuilding potential associated with sport.

Cardenas (2012 p.3) states that sport has “the capacity to foster friendship and to unite people around a common activity, sometimes in most unexpected circumstances.” A classic example was the Christian Truce in 1914 in which former rivals – German and English troops - mitigated their hostilities after they had played a football match together. This football engagement involving erstwhile troops helped to provide relief and transformed relationships between these erstwhile enemies.

Further, Cardenas (2012, p.7,8) points out that sports brings people of various walks of life together, thereby breaking through the socio-cultural, political and religious barricades and connecting people and diverse communities, plunging them into social networking and fostering cohesion. The Sport for Development and Peace International Work Group (SDP IWG) (2008, p.207) sees sport as a potential mechanism that primarily aims at bridging relationships within communities. From this perspective, sporting events are perceived to be having the potential to build a sense of identity and fellowship even between conflicting parties. In essence, sporting events have proved inclusive of all social groups in that these events often involve families, friends and neighbours, thus promoting close ties, shared understanding, common ground, and networks between different people. On that note, Kvalsund (2007, p.5) concludes that: “Sport activities can create safe spaces for interaction where communication can be

restored and understanding and tolerance can be built...” In El Salvador, sport was used to create a platform to disseminate information on conflict prevention and nonviolent resolution of conflict. Further, pupils in El Salvador were taught life skills which included communication and conflict resolution skills. This view was echoed by SDP IWG, pointing out that sporting events can be used as an educative platform and space for dialogue between the virtuous community groups to promote social cohesion as well as preventing social exclusion. Thus, SDP IWG (2008) argues for a prominent role of sporting events for peace.

On another note, SDP IWG (2008) looks at the challenges of sport as a peacebuilding mechanism. From its perspective, sport is neutral in the sense that the direction it can take is often determined by the behaviour of those involved at a particular sporting event. The SDP IWG highlights that sport can be used to perpetuate conflict and concludes that peacebuilding is brittle and an impulsive process, as such, sporting for peace carried out in volatile environments can turn out violent, thus undermining the incentives of sporting for peace.

Kvalsund (2007, p.2) also examined the challenges of sport to peacebuilding which he highlighted that “sport has been used as a tool to create and to add fuel to conflict.” To prove his point he singled out conflicts experienced in the Balkan, South America and England as largely exacerbated by sport. However, the SDP IWG (2008) suggests that through collaborative strategic planning and stakeholder coordination, sport can potentially yield peace aspirations. In similar thought, Kvalsund (2007, p.2) points out that sport advances the values of acceptance and tolerance: teams and fans have the potential to accept to be winners or losers. He warns that peace builders should have a sound understanding of existing antagonisms and conflict involving the groups involved in a particular sporting event. Further, he writes:

Sport can be used as an important pedagogical forum for peacebuilding and reconciliation. During and after the playing of sports, participants can engage in talks or educational programmes regarding the benefits of social integration, reconciliation and peaceful co-existence (2007, p.9).

It is upon this realization of peacebuilding potential associated with sporting events that, LPCs from across the globe have in recent past taken a leading role in embracing sport as a critical peacebuilding mechanism to broker peace between conflicting groups and communities.

At the international level, the peacebuilding potential associated with sport has gained favour. For example, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1999, declared peace as a basic human right. Following this declaration, the UN General Assembly in 2006 made Resolution 61/10 which declared:

“sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace” (A/RES/61/10). Although sport is not a panacea to peace challenges, Cardenas (2012 p.4) applauded the UN for endorsing sport as a vehicle for peacebuilding.

Owing to these international developments and perceptions of sport and peacebuilding, at regional levels, the UN global policy framework was adopted. For example, although Africa is still experiencing violent conflict in the Darfur region, DRC, Somalia and other places, the African Union had introduced the International Year of African Football in 2006, thus sending a signal and endorsing the notion that sport is an important catalyst for peacebuilding. The first African Convention of 2007 strongly embraced this notion.

Elsewhere, the South American Football Confederation, the Confederation of North, Central and Caribbean Association football has also acknowledged the potentialities of sport as a peacebuilding mechanism. In the recent past, during the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008, the contributions of sport to peacebuilding was strongly confirmed and endorsed (Cardenas, 2012, p.5). Since sporting activities are myriad ranging from soccer [football], basketball, dancing, music, cricket among others, this study takes football as a point of reference to illustrate peacebuilding potential associate with sporting events.

3.3.2 Football events

Makwerere and Mandoga (2012, p.036) examine the contributions of football to peacebuilding with a view to espouse the values of football that relates to peace. They identified mutual respect, fair play, participatory and trust as values of football and from their perspective, these values are building blocks for social cohesion. Participation stands out as the heart-beat of football because it is premised on the values of team work, trust and cooperation not only between players but even spectators. Thus, participation is based on the acknowledgement that players and spectators have inherent potential not only to participate in the football match but to own the process, thus placing emphasis on the need for cooperation and team work in order to influence the much needed result.

On another note, Makwerere and Mandoga (2012, p.036) argue that fairness and honesty are cardinal virtues of football which impacts the interactions of players even after the match. They noted that a football match that is characterized by fairness and honesty enables the winning and losing players, the coaches and even fans to shake hands after the match has ended. Rigby (1998) argues that people use symbols to signify peace. One such common symbol is a handshake. He asserts that “using a handshake is a symbol of peace which signify fellowship and reconciliation” (ibid., p.476). In my Shona culture

shaking hands with someone is a gesture of friendliness and social harmony. In similar thought, Makwerere and Mandoga (2012, p.036) note that the contributions of football to peacebuilding lies in its capacity to embody tolerance and appreciation of the outcome of the match, thus inculcating compromise as a virtue and an outcome for working together towards a common goal by contesting teams.

In other quarters, one United Kingdom football coach who was helping in the coaching involving Jews and Arab teams, when asked to comment on football for peace project (F4P) in the middle east, he commented that “football is all about bringing people together” (Liebmann and Rookwood, 2007, p.14). Liebmann and Rookwood (2007, p.14) pointed out that F4P started in 2001 targeting primarily Palestinians and Jewish antagonists. The purpose was to forge possibilities of building bridges in northern Israel. Despite challenges in 2006, which involved bombings by Israelites extremists, Liebmann and Rookwood (2007, p.16) noted that Palestinian and Jewish children who participated in this pilot project were able to sit next to each other and to socialize off pitch. These social interactions indicated potentialities of sport to foster tolerance, co-existence and networking. They argued that the values central to football coaching include respect, inclusion, equality and trust and when administering football matches players are expected to conform and comply with each of these peaceable themes, thus placing greater emphasis on peaceful co-existence and tolerance which are critical peacebuilding components.

On another note, Makwerere and Mandoga (2012, p.036) applauded the peacebuilding potential of football on the basis of the values of respect, participation, trust and teamwork but criticized football for fanning violence in other instances. To illustrate this point, they singled out the violence and hooliganism that flared up at football matches in Zimbabwe particularly in the early 2000s and cited frustration and poor performance by referees as contributing factors. Further, they pointed harsh economic conditions as one of the contributing factors to violence and hooliganism and contend that in such a context, the football pitch can be used as a ready-made platform to register discontent. As mentioned earlier on, in contemporary Zimbabwe’s most dominant ethnic groups, Shona and Ndebele, football matches are often used as platforms to register ethnic animosities. Ncube (2014, p.200) contends that rivalry “is contested on and off the pitch. Indications are that this rivalry is based on real and perceived historical and contemporary ethnic and regional enmities between Shona and Ndebele.” He highlights that football matches between the two major teams: Dynamos and Highlanders football clubs, set the tone for animosities and hostilities existing between these two ethnic groups to manifest. Notwithstanding the perceived potential challenges associated with football as a potential hub for conflict and violence, scholars and agencies seem to agree that football has the potential to promote mutual respect, trust,

tolerance, social cohesion, reconciliation, unity and co-existence across communities. This study argues that peaceable values in football events are more prominent than potential conflict and violence.

Exemplars of success stories owing to football as a vehicle for peacebuilding are plenty in literature. In Cote d’voire, DRC, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Palestine and Israel (Middle East), to not provide an exhaustive list, football tournaments were used as vehicles to promote peaceable values. In Burundi, football tournaments were used to promote ethnic tolerance and mutual understanding between the youth and it was estimated that more than 13,500 youth were out-reached owing to football matches (Cardenas, 2012).

Similarly, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, football initiatives targeting school children during vacations were implemented and it is estimated that about 125,000 children ranging between 8 and 14 years of age benefited from the initiative. The aim of the Bosnia and Herzegovina football matches was to inculcate reconciliation, social cohesion and cooperation (Cardenas, 2012). On the basis of these and other examples, it seems appropriate to affirm that football matches are increasingly becoming a tried and tested vehicle for peacebuilding not because it is a panacea to peace challenges confronting communities but because of its peacebuilding potential. As reflected above, in the longstanding conflict involving Palestine, Israel and Jordan football successfully brokered peace as the emphasis there was to encourage tolerance, co-existence and cooperation. As evidence suggests, it is clear that football encounters have the potential to culminate into tolerance, co-existence and cooperation during the matches, thus charting a better course for a preferred peaceful future between former antagonists.

To this end, it can be argued that football matches have proved to be resourceful in opening up space for interaction, mutual respect, trust and social networking between players and fans of various political, cultural, religious and ethnic divide, creating hope for a better future of harmonious interactions during kick off and knockout. To the players and fans, the football match often represents a memorable opportunity in which some people break-off with a bad past of intolerance, mistrust, disrespect of other ethnic groups having the potential to open a new chapter often characterised with trust, tolerance and cohesion. On the basis of the above argument, it is clear that football is a potential game changer for the better in more or less every conflict situation at community, village or district levels.

3.3.3 Football for peace (F4P) initiatives

For well over a decade now, peacebuilding oriented football initiatives have been gathering momentum with international and local organizations providing support of varying degrees for football tournaments

to take off between warring parties. The UN Mission in DRC with peace games programme to promote reconciliation is a classic example of how international organizations have now proffered new alternatives to peacebuilding alongside diplomatic process and peace keeping. Because over the past decade, football has created space for countries experiencing and coming out of violent conflicts and in the process some countries have charted a better future out of these football encounters. Sierra Leone is a text book example of the potential success of football in brokering peaceful co-existence between former warring parties. This makes football initiates increasingly more effective, relevant and sustainable vehicle for peace by each passing moment, thus creating the need for football for peace initiatives even more necessary.

Cardenas (2012) examines grassroots peacebuilding-oriented football initiatives that have been taken on-board over the years to promote peace programmes and the most popular one has been the F4P programme. These include:

- Open fun schools, was established in 1998, to promote reintegration of divided communities. Its football programmes have worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Georgia. Approximately, tens of thousands children of school going age from antagonistic communities have participated in football for peace programmes.
- F4P, which started in 2001, was mainly targeting Jewish and Arab communities such as Israel and Jordan. The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland have also participated in the F4P programme. The target group has been mostly children of school going age of which to date about 1000 children from divided communities have participated.
- Football for hope movement, founded in 2007 and peacebuilding through football associations is one of its fundamental programme areas;
- Project goals for peace international operate in both Colombia and Bolivia targeting young people and developing a culture of peace through football is one of the programme areas (Cardenas, 2012).

These and other peace-oriented football initiatives popularized football as a vehicle for peace across the globe. What is common about these initiatives is that football has created space for interaction between antagonistic communities at grassroots level, something which is usually not possible during peace process, thus football help to formalize co-existence, tolerance and interaction. Although these peace initiatives produced different results and experienced various setbacks in host countries, the important thing to note was that through football conflict acts can potentially engage each other. Thus, since football has the propensity to invoke tolerance, co-existence, mutual respect and cooperation between players and fans, communities in Seke and elsewhere that have not yet tried this mechanism can utilize this low-cost

but important mechanism that has the potential to bring warring parties together for possibilities of charting a preferred future. Having discussed peacebuilding potential associated with football events, the discussion now turns to look at entrepreneurial activities as peacebuilding mechanisms.

3.3.4 Entrepreneurial activities

The concept of entrepreneurship is defined by Kanothi (2009, p.12) as innovation and coordination of factors of production with a view to create a set of products/commodities and services. He highlights that entrepreneurship also means doing, making and providing commodities and services differently, especially with regard to how products and services are to be produced and made available. From this perspective, it seems to be the case that entrepreneurship is more oriented towards business enterprising given that its core elements involves the provision of commodities and services.

The theme of entrepreneurship has been tackled by various authorities. Pastakia (1998, p.157) sees entrepreneurship as a process involving individuals or groups attempting to address social issues through an organized initiative. From his perspective, entrepreneurship can be done using the non-market routes. Pastakia (1998, p.157) sees market failures as the chief culprit that invokes life-support systems to suffer from economic instability. He suggests entrepreneurship as the basis for individuals or institutions to cope with economic doldrums since it seeks to empower individuals and groups to cope and reinforce their livelihoods. For Wim (2008, p.3), entrepreneurship involves “the unemployed who seeks to irk out a living through informal self-employment in small enterprises.” In a post-conflict environments as is the case in Zimbabwe, with high and increasing unemployment rate which has persisted for more than two decades and the overall deterioration in the quality of life of citizens which claims 62,6 per cent of households living below the poverty datum line (Moyo, undated, p.84), entrepreneurship can be an effective mechanism for peacebuilding. International Alert (2006, p.166) praises the important role of entrepreneurial activities in post-conflict communities, but acknowledges a dearth of information in this area, citing that most entrepreneurial activities are carried out informally and therefore are not being taken care of and worst still remains undocumented. International Alert (2006, p.167) warns that failure to record informal entrepreneurial activities is mere blindness to the contributions of entrepreneurial activities to peacebuilding at local community level.

Communities in Zimbabwe have experienced economic shocks and decline ever since the late 1990s to the 2000s. As mentioned already, by July 2008, inflation had reached 231 million per cent, not until the introduction of a multi-currency system in 2009. Moyo (undated, p.84) states that the gross domestic product increased to 11.4 per cent by 2010 and 2012 but later on dropped to 3.4 per cent by 2013.

Resultantly, a decline in education, health care and standards of living, especially food security, which is compounded by poor rainfall patterns in the 2014/2015 agricultural season, are a menace to communities in Zimbabwe. Vanmeenen (2010, p.20) singled out poverty, unemployment and blurred opportunities for progress as determinants of conflict but suggests that peacebuilding programmes can help to mitigate these peace challenges at community level. For example, he suggests that savings and internal lending communities (SILCs) are among the mechanisms that can help to fill this peacebuilding gap. He applauded SILCs for their capacity to bring people with the agenda of helping each other economically together, for creating a platform for active engagement in livelihood restoration, mutual support and building cohesion as incentives for peacebuilding at local community levels. However, owing to the role of SILC, Vanmeenen (2010, p.21) acknowledges the reconnection of perpetrators and victims with their community members in Rwanda the aftermath of genocide and concludes that SILC were crucial especially for communities emerging from a conflict, as SILC have the potential to help communities affected by conflict to address peace challenges in their locality.

According to Vanmeenen (2010, p.1), SILC is a recently transformed model by Catholic Relief Services which traces its roots in the Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) and Accumulated Savings and Credit Associations (ASCAs). In Shona, ROSCA is translated *kutambirisana* and ASCA is translated *Mukando*. In the former scheme, members of the group agree on a certain amount of money to pool together and then the whole lump sum is given to a member in rotation until the first circle is complete. Bouman (1995, p.375) notes the social and economic dimensions of ROSCA to the players. He states that ROSCA requires players with steady income of comparable size to ensure repayments of the loaned funds in instalments. While he applauds quick access to a sum of money as one of the major incentive for ROSCA, than when saving individually, he criticizes it for being a onetime affair because the player has to wait for another cycle (1995, p.374).

This study is more focused on ASCA which is popularly understood as *Mukando* in Ward 8 of Seke district. On 7 April 2015, when I visited one of the groups of women at Marimbi village in Ward 8 of Seke who had come for the *Mukando* scheme, a woman who was presiding over the proceedings reported that the scheme that they were practicing was called ASCA which they popularly code-name as *Mukando* scheme. ASCA is described by Bouman as a money-lending enterprise. He notes that participants make contributions which carry an interest rate ranging between 5 to 10 per cent (1995, p.375). In many respects, ASCA scheme comprise of members who contribute funds into a common pool and loan it out to group members at an agreed interests rate (Patel *et al.*, 2012, p.21). In the groups that I observed in Seke and the WPC *Mukando* scheme, they have agreed on an interest of 20 per cent. The ASCA

(henceforth referred to as *Mukando*) scheme is a well-practised scheme in Ward 8 of Seke district. *Mukando* was introduced in Ward 8 in 1998 through the instrumentality of CARE international. In 2010, Viri micro-finance took over groups of *Mukando* scheme that were established by CARE and they established other groups throughout the district. By 8 November 2014 and 7 April 2015, the *Mukando* groups I observed were still being supervised by Viri micro-finance.

However, due to the widespread acceptance and use of *Mukando* in Ward 8, the newly appointed WPC in Seke adopted this scheme. After seven consecutive weeks of practicing *Mukando* scheme the WPC wrote a *Mukando* constitution that helped to regulate its operations (see *Mukando* constitution, Appendix 11). All the women that are members of the WPC belong to more than one *Mukando* scheme in their villages. As such, when it comes to the writing of the constitution these women were at the forefront.

Ward 8 *Mukando* constitution is directly linked to entrepreneurial activities as reflected in the aims of the *Mukando* constitution (items 4.4: *promoting entrepreneurship among members*; 4.5: *Assisting each other in buying tools, equipment and other household gadgets*; 4.6: *Assisting each other in paying school fees for our children*) (see Appendix 11). What is written in item 4.5 and 4.6 in this constitution is echoed by Bouman (1995, p.375) that money loaned out to members of ASCA is directed towards payment of school fees, house construction, funeral assistance and improvement of the quality of life. Chuma *et al* (2013, p.591-2) in a recent study in Masvingo province confirm that Internal Savings Lending schemes (ISLSs) (which is another name for *Mukando*) are used for paying school fees, accumulation of household properties, food provision among other uses. *Mukando* is another category of self-help groups which is directly related to the concept of self-reliance. Self-help groups offer ordinary people the opportunity to make decisions and participate in addressing problems that affect their everyday life (Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003, p.200). Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003, p.199) observed that self-reliance emphasizes that individuals must form groups and get involved “in planned programmes from which they may gain skills that will enable them to cope more successful with problems of their everyday life.” Item 4.3 of the constitution captures this notion as its aim is to improve the quality of life of members of the WPC. Thus, through *Mukando* scheme, collaborative work is fostered and individual members have the potential to learn from each other and to gain skills on how to manage their families as well as improving their quality of life.

Additionally, Ward 8 constitution instituted a social fund. According to this constitution, Social fund is money set aside to assist members to meet expenses in emergencies. Each member will be required to pay

an amount of US\$5 towards this fund at the end of every third month within the year; that is March, June, September and December (Fieldwork, 2014).

As stipulated in the Constitution, the social fund is meant to caution members of the WPC who may have encountered social problems such as death of a close relative. However, what is not clear is the meaning of the word emergencies as the Constitution states that the purpose of a social fund is to meet emergencies. The Shona word translated to mean emergencies is *matambudziko*. In its original context this word means a variety of social problems in worst case scenarios *matambudziko* include death. *Mukando* is not a burial society, however, the function of social fund seems to suggest that problems related to death can also be cautioned through this fund.

From a more general understanding *matambudziko* can mean lack of food or failure by someone to pay school fees for his/her child. Thus, the social fund is meant to caution those challenges that cause insecurities to people and their families which is a key result area for peacebuilding. Overall, peacebuilding seeks to address those social problems that disrupt internal equilibrium as well as external factors that militate against cordial harmony. In some sense, the functions of the social fund scheme as stated in the constitution seems to point to the same purpose that of addressing peace challenges encountered by individuals in the homes or neighbourhood. Although the amount seems small but the availability of such a scheme indicates preparedness to carry each other's burdens in times of need, in which case, members of the group are assured to get assisted when a problem and a need arose. That way the social fund helps to mitigate the impact of a social problem the same way entrepreneurship does to individuals and groups experiencing economic shocks.

Mukando is another category of mutual aid association. Patel *et al* (2012, p.20) argued that mutual aid associations assist individuals and groups to save and accumulate capital. They noted that mutual aid associations build up community bonds and social integration, through the provision of funds when contingencies occur, thus cautioning individuals, families and groups members to cope with unpredictable insecurities such as death, school fees, ill-health or food shortages. From their perspective, while these mutual associations promote social well-being and development, thus, mitigating conflict and violence at local community, Patel *et al* suggested that groups involved in mutual aid associations require technical assistance, subsidies, training and improved management and coordination and most importantly institutional support from incumbent governments (*ibid*, 2012, p.28). The important thing to note is that these mutual aid association or self-help groups denotes different forms of entrepreneurial activities across communities.

3.3.5 Factors influencing entrepreneurship in Shona communities

Shona people, like any other people group, have very rich cultural resources related to entrepreneurial activities which directly fall under verbal art, that is, proverbial sayings. For example, the proverb: *apunyaira haashayi misodzi* (if you put some effort you will reap something valuable) is a case in point. The term *kupanyaira* (putting effort) is to engage in an activity/working under very difficult conditions. The basic idea is: although the results of the toil are not satisfactory but at least one gets something at the end of the day. This proverb teaches the values of confidence, hopefulness and determination in whatever one is doing. As a result of these cultural resources, some people have been able to cope with economic melt-down in Zimbabwe by engaging in income generating activities and to a large extent this has contributed to relative peace in communities because each person feels motivated by the maxim: *apunyaira haashayi misodzi*. In the current study, it may not be far-fetched to assume that on the basis of the values propagated by this proverb, the majority of people in Zimbabwe as we speak are engaged in various entrepreneurial activities hoping to reap the fruits of their toil and thus, enhancing satisfaction, hope and confidence which are critical pillars for peace at household and community levels.

Another cultural resource, but also related to the above proverb is; *Mbavarira inoda anenharo* (endurance in the hope of getting results). The term *Mbavarira* is from *kuvavarira* (fervent desire) meaning trying and doing something without losing hope and such a person keeps on going until s/he gets the intended results. Thus, *mbavarira* becomes more like determination with endurance in it in order to get results that one intends to obtain but these results have got certainty. For someone at school it may suggest that if it is a pass one automatically will get a pass although it may not necessarily be a distinction. In that sense, *mbavarira inoda anenharo* suggests that there is no option for failure if one remains determined, focused and committed. In its original context, this proverb is said when things are difficult or in hopeless situations and the purpose is to encourage someone experiencing trouble to keep going in confidence and focused. At a time when Zimbabwe is experiencing a perennial economic melt-down evidenced by unemployment, low wages and industrial closure to name but a few, the proverb *mbavarira inoda anenharo* seems to be the impetus that prompts most women, youth and men to engage in entrepreneurial activities

In relation to Shona people, the majority are using these cultural resources to keep themselves engaged in income-generating activities such as selling airtime, fruits and vegetables and second-hand clothes to name but a few. Most, if not all, have been pushing even if they do not get anything in order to survive given the harsh economic conditions. We cannot say that such people are experiencing peace but they have self-

discipline and they do have a goal that is to succeed no matter how small: they keep on pressing towards the goal. When success is achieved then they have peace within themselves.

The term for income generating activities in Shona is *mabhindauko*. In Shona *mabhindauko* means multiple ventures to sustain and improve one's livelihoods. Individuals engage in *mabhindauko* in order to feed their families and this helps to build peace between individuals and groups in the community. In that case *mabhindauko* contributes significantly to the attainment of peace at micro level because when one has food, shelter, and is able to pay school fees for his/her children –one is likely to experience satisfaction, happiness and a free mind and these aspects are critical for cordial harmony with other people.

In addition, in the WPC peacebuilding constitution the role of income generating projects is central. In section 5.1: *Mobilizing resources for the peacebuilding work*, income generating projects which is connected directly to entrepreneurship stood out in the Constitution. Section 5.1.2.1 spelled out the various types of projects of low-cost (see Appendix 13). These projects are undertaken “to satisfy the pressing needs of the community” (Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003, p.205) in Ward 8. Although these income-generating projects are considered as low-cost projects, they, however have the potential to improve the livelihoods of individuals and household and thus, enhancing peacebuilding both at individual and household levels. These multiple ventures have greater potential to contributing to peace as mentioned above.

One of the basic underlying assumption for *mabhindauko*, as is popularly believed by Shona people, is that *mabhindauko* removes the desire to cause trouble because when someone is engaged in income-generating projects, the mind is occupied and focused, this can potentially be a building block for conflict prevention. In that sense, *mabhindauko* is a corridor of escape from confrontation both at the individual and group level. At the individual level, if one spends a day without doing anything s/he can be dragged into or can instigate confrontation. This is akin to the saying: *an idle mind is the devil's workshop* meaning one is likely to instigate confrontation or be dragged into confrontation if his/her mind is not occupied with something but a person who is busy with some activity can be spared from confrontation. This assumption could be one of the factors why some Shona people are now engaged in *mabhindauko* both in rural and urban centres. However, for the WPC, *mabhindauko* is a peacebuilding mechanism. This study argues that these proverbial sayings could have potentially influenced the majority of Shona people to engage in *mabhindauko*. Whichever way one can look at *mabhindauko*, the fact remains that *mabhindauko* have peacebuilding potential in that a person engaging in such entrepreneurial activities -

practice, determination, focus, discipline and self-sufficiency - all these values are necessary and important for inculcating peace at the individual and community level.

At an LPC meeting involving seven WPCs from Wedza, Marondera and Seke districts on 17 January 2015, all participants acknowledged that *mabhindauko* was a critical component for peacebuilding. Overall, the important thing about entrepreneurial activities is that they help individual and groups at community level to cope with economic destabilization and contribute towards meeting their basic needs. Entrepreneurial activities in Ward 8 of Seke are considered as one of the key result areas of the WPC, as such it is important to explore the concept, creation and applicability of LPC framework.

3.4 Section Three: The LPC framework

The implementation of the concept of peacebuilding has been a momentous development in the history of humankind, notably since the end of the Second World War. In the last 25 plus years following the traction of peacebuilding in international policy and practice by Boutros-Boutros Ghali, two peacebuilding frameworks have stood out as having a remarkable impact on the broad-spectrum and trend of peacebuilding processes.

One such framework was the I4P in the 1990s, which viewed peacebuilding as an integrated process requiring strategic designs in order to address all the facts surrounding conflict and the capacity to create an enabling environment that sustains peace (Lederach, 1997, p.20). This framework marked the development of an understanding of conflict not only as an event or just mere conflictual behaviour but conflict as a system. As a system, conflict came to be understood as behavioural, attitudinal and a systemic phenomenon involving a number of interconnected elements such as context, history and actors (Lederach et al, 2007, p.4), thus placing heavy emphasis on the need for comprehensive and all-encompassing peace architecture to ensure sustainable peace. I4P also brought relief and changed the fortunes of the entire globe against violent conflict as the framework buttressed the design and establishment of peace enhancing structures as a set of peacebuilding blocks. In many respects, the I4P framework placed the seed for a broader view of peacebuilding, which came to be understood not only as a “science but an art, where imagination and creativity are an essential part of peacebuilding process” (Reychler and Langer, 2006, p.6, 28).

LPC is the other such peacebuilding framework for peace processes at local and national echelons (Sangqu, 2014, p.422) which emerged after several decades of failed or at most limited peacebuilding achievements under the peace-keeping paradigm across the globe. The arrival of this mechanism was seen

as the precursor into a new era in peacebuilding processes which held promise over the peace-keeping paradigm but its espousal and utilization, as some authorities found out (for example, Odendaal, 2008; 2010; van Tongeren, 2012), remained limited especially at community level because contemporary peacebuilding frameworks are more predisposed to elite structures as opposed to grassroots-driven.

In the 1990s, many countries that experienced violent conflict yielded to the demands for the need to establishing local peace enhancing structures to address peace challenges both at macro and micro levels. The Northern Somaliland is a classic example, as Paffenholz (2013, p.5) notes: “a locally owned, bottom up consultations led to successful peacebuilding and reconciliation,” while in southern Somalia, all outside peacekeeping interventions fell flat to put violence to a halt. Thus, locally-owned peace enhancing structures became the most momentous mechanism in the history of peacebuilding since the demise of Cold War and they have impacted the post-conflict fortunes of literally almost every conflict ridden community across the globe. The dimension and magnitude of results of LPCs in conflict-ridden communities represented a concrete opportunity to sever with the grimy past and open a new chapter in the peacebuilding dispensation, thus placing emphasis on LPCs as a peacebuilding game changer at both macro and micro levels.

3.4.1 Creation of informal LPCs

It is the creation of LPCs that determines whether it is formal or informal. Formal LPCs are created through a peace agreement or piece of legislation such as the National Peace Accord (NPA) of South Africa between 1991 and 1994 (Ball, 1997, p.2; Bremner, 1997, p.242). In Serbia, LPCs were established through the Committee on Inter-Community Relations in 2002, while Sierra Leone, LPCs were established through the District Code of Conduct Monitoring Committees (Odendaal, 2010, p.37).

In contrast, informal LPCs are created by local community members using the self-selection process. As such, informal peace committees do not enjoy official recognition from the government mainly because they are created by ordinary people. In other words, the majority of participants who establish informal peace committees do not represent government but community interests (Odendaal, 2010, p.37). The current study is more interested with informal peace committees.

The term informal is derived from the fact that these structures are initiated and driven by local communities. In other words, the structure is accountable to the community, not to the government and the system that regulates the operations of informal peace committees is based on cultural norms and values of the host community (Huyse and Salter, 2008, p.7; van Tongeren, 2013, p.40). Their creation is

dynamic, flexible and adaptable because there are no laid down rules (Lederach, 1997, p.84; Odendaal cited in Sangqu, 2014, p.423). The flexibility of the creation of informal peace committees lay in the fact that communities have varied social norms and values. Overall, all communities involved in setting up LPCs “identify individuals who have a vision for peacebuilding; who enjoy the trust of their communities; and who have the aptitude to build peace” (Sangqu 2014, p.423).

As mentioned already, the major characteristic of informal peace committees is the use of a process called self-selection. The important aspects about the self-selection process are that people volunteer themselves into the committee; the community approve individuals that meet positive qualities such as faithfulness, honesty, trustworthiness, respectable or ability to resolving conflict and these qualities are culture specific. Thus, the informal peace committee is set by community members to advance the interests of the community and it is these aspects which constitutes self-selection process. Ahmad *et al* (2013, p.104) and van Tongeren (2012, p.108) pointed out that voluntarism and community interests are critical features of the self-selection process. The self-selection process was employed in Wajir district, South Kordofan in Sudan, Colombia, in some districts in DRC, Burundi, Uganda, Afghanistan, to mention but a few examples (Adan and PKalya, 2006, p.3; van Tongeren, 2012, p.108; 2013, pp.41-51). (See a detailed discussion on self-selection model in Chapter Eight.)

3.4.2 The nature of informal LPCs

Moyo (undated, p.93) picks up on the issue about the composition of LPCs. He contends that the composition of LPCs vary from place to place, as each context has its own merits and demerits. Of particular note is that LPCs should be inclusive meaning all the relevant stakeholders in the host community should occupy certain positions, under the umbrella of LPC. The inclusive nature of informal peace committees is intended to intensify the non-discriminatory civic engagement elements inherent in the basic ethos of peace committees unlike customary courts which are usually male dominated and exclusive.

Moyo asserts that: “LPCs includes civil servants, church leaders, traditional leaders, state security sector actors, political party leaders, women, youth and other stakeholders such as organisations operating at the community level” (undated, p.93). From this, Moyo puts his weight behind the inclusive nature of LPCs in terms of composition. Odendaal (2010, p.6) defines inclusiveness as a phenomenon involving “different community sections in conflict.” The inclusive nature of peace committees make them more empowering in that both men and women are expected to occupy strategic positions.

Sangqu (2014, p.424) applauds the inclusive nature of LPCs arguing that local communities comprise of different social groups who include the youth, women, children and religious groups. She notes that these social groups represent the different cultural, ethnic, political, religious, economic and power dynamics existing in communities. Thus, inclusivity is the primary target of any LPC in that they have an imperative to involve the relevant stakeholders in the peace structure, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized groups like women and youth. As Glowachi and Gonc (2013, p.20) argue inclusivity of the LPC confers women and youth the legitimacy to address peace challenges in their host community. The principle of inclusive peacebuilding espoused by Lederach (cited in Page, 2002) finds expression in the informal LPCs model.

However, in some quarters, the inclusion of women in LPCs has suffered major setbacks. Frogh *et al* (2010., p.20) highlights that the inclusion of women in Nepalese LPCs were hindered by two major of factors such as illiteracy and male dominance and faced with these realities, most women lost confidence and shied away from participating in LPCs and thus, hindering the participation of women in LPCs. Frogh *et al* observed that LPCs offer a window of hope for women empowerment and participation in peace processes at local level and suggests that communities should do all they can to ensure that women participate in LPC at grassroots level (*ibid.*).

One of the key features of informal peace committees is that all social groups are included in the establishment of this peace structure. Moyo (undated, p.91) states that community members are the heartbeat of LPC and are pivotal for the stability of the LPC. Further, he argues that the higher the level of participation by community members in the formation and composition of an LPC the greater the chances for the LPC to be effective and sustainable in building peace. Thus, the issue of inclusiveness in relation to informal peace committees has something to do with representation of all social groups such as women, youth, elderly and other stakeholders such as political parties, civic organizations or religious groups to mentioned but a few. Although, informal peace committees secure legitimacy in the host community, they have some challenges.

3.4.3 Challenges associated with informal LPCs

The major problem that informal LPCs suffer is that voluntarism is considered a distinct feature that makes informal LPCs unique as compared to formal LPCs. Most informal peace committees are built on voluntarism suggesting that if volunteers do not come forth there is likelihood that an informal peace committee can fall flat (van Tongeren, 2012, p.107).

Moyo (undated, p.92) points out that the power dynamics within communities have influence in the formation and composition of the LPC. If the community is male-dominated, the composition of the peace committee will be influenced by these gender dynamics and thus posing a challenge to gender representation in the committee. Adan and Pklya (2006, p.15) pointed out that, although peace committees drew much of their approaches from both customary and cosmopolitan norms and values, the challenge is traditional practices have not been opening up especially in those areas involving the inclusion of women, youth and political leaders. Odendaal (2010, p.40) contends that: “traditional customs, particularly the authority of elders, meant that women and youth could not participate in peace process.” This is a challenge faced by informal peace committees in that the exclusion of women and youth serve only to reinforce patriarchal system in communities which embrace tradition.

In addition, another challenge is that in some countries such as Zimbabwe, peace committees do not have any legal framework because their establishment followed an informal model in which people at the grassroots were involved in setting up peace committees without legal mandate. In this context, the challenge is that LPCs do not enjoy official recognition from the state and therefore they often suffer setbacks in terms their inclusion in mainstream peacebuilding (Odendaal, 2010, p.40).

The other problem here is that informal peace committees lack capacity and resources (van Tongeren, 2012, p.107) As a result, majority of informal peace committees are run through funded programmes by Oxfam America or UNDP, among others. For instance, in Zimbabwe, the ZIMCET peace committee programme survived a near collapse due to lack of funding until the organization was rescued by Oxfam America and other well-wishers in 2003. Thus, peace committee run on funded programmes run the risk that some members participate on the basis of what they will get out of the peace programme rather than what they are likely to contribute (ZIMCET, 2014).

Another challenge is that informal LPCs are restricted in taking part in the peace process. Sangqu (2014, p.423) points out that peace processes have been largely dominated by the elites, that is, political leaders and international stakeholders. She noted that at present, LPCs are situated to address “the softer aspects of peace process” [that is, reconciliation, forgiveness and healing related issues] and concludes that such a position have ripple effects on the critical role of LPC in peacebuilding. However, she contends that while peace processes cannot be left to political elites alone, she notes that LPCs should not play a subordinate role but actively collaborate in the peace process. Further, she recommended that attempts should be made by elites to give space to LPCs to participate actively in the entire peace process but warns that LPCs should operate independent of elites, if trust, legitimacy and social cohesion are to be harnessed.

The exclusion of LPCs in peace processes is blindness to the multifaceted approach to peacebuilding espoused by Lederach (cited in Page, 2002, p.59). This approach contends that mutual interdependence and inclusion of the entire population affected by conflict and violence is the fundamental principle of peacebuilding.

From fieldwork, the challenges LPCs were captured that they do not have the capacity to address violence that is politically-motivated. Narrative 0002 [from this study] made the following observations:

Often peace committees do not have the capacity to deal directly with political level conflicts. This limitation is especially noticeable during election time when political polarisation in communities takes centre stage. Even peace committees formed mainly of members of different political parties are often found wanting during these times. This paralysis is mainly due to the fact that these types of conflicts are usually instigated from outside of the community by people at a higher level within the political formations involved, such that the local political functionaries merely follow orders.

The overriding idea is that although informal peace committees prove to be an effective peacebuilding mechanism in their host communities, they have challenges. This study therefore argues that if informal peace committees are strengthened by their incumbent governments they can be more effective in addressing peace challenges affecting their communities. One alternative of strengthening informal peace committees is to transform them into mainstream peacebuilding (see discussion in 3.6 below).

3.4.4 Opportunities associated with informal LPCs

van Tongeren (2012, p.107) points out that when a state's fragility occurs, the creation of informal LPCs helps communities to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. Supportively, Paffenholz (2009, p.4) argues that communities are better placed to address challenges affecting them and in meeting their needs. She says that communities have proven to be resilient by providing coping mechanisms even after experiencing violent conflict. In similar vein, Whitehead (2002, p.2) argues that communities are naturally occurring units of solution and conclude that communities are like an ecosystem with the capacity to work towards solutions to its own problems. He suggests that resources at the disposal of the community should be harnessed and enhanced. These merits form the basis for informal peace committees.

Adan and PKalya (2006, pp.13-15) point out that LPCs have the opportunity to facilitate peace dialogue, reconciliatory forums, and raising conflict awareness. Coordination of peace initiatives are major objectives of peace committees. In Zimbabwe, LPCs had the opportunity to offer peace education to local

community members, identification of potential areas of conflict and addressing them, facilitating and mediating in conflict situations that arise at community level, creating a platform for engagement at community level and advocacy on issues relating to peace and development (ZIMCET, 2014).

Moyo (undated, p.92) argues that the contributions of LPCs is indispensable for the success of peacebuilding both at local and macro levels in that they have the capacity to harness traditional leaders, politicians, civil society and other stakeholders. From this Moyo concludes that LPCs are “an important community infrastructure for peace...” (p.94). However, he notes that LPCs have the potential to feed into the NPRC, an infrastructure which was crafted by the government of Zimbabwe with the intention of providing modern Zimbabweans with a common blueprint for addressing the legacy of violent colonial and post colonial violence, polarization and other conflict issues as well as building a peaceful future.

In addition, Odendaal cited in Sangqu (2014, p.423) attempts to establish opportunities that are at the disposal of LPCs. One of the opportunities is that LPCs have the power to synchronize consensus as Sangqu states that they “have a wide reach through their various networks...allowing people to take responsibility for their own peace” (p.423). In similar thought, Moyo (undated, p.92) points out that, LPCs are “a practical response to ensure peace prevails...” Moyo concludes that:

LPCs build peace in their communities through creating dialogue spaces where people engage each other in search of solutions to their challenges. They also facilitate peacebuilding sessions.

In some situations, they mediate conflict and act as early warning systems and work towards addressing human security concerns in their areas (undated, p.93).

This opportunity goes a long way in ensuring ownership of the peacebuilding process by host communities, thus ensuring legitimacy of the peace structure and the process as well.

Odendaal (2008) and van Tongeren (2011) argue that LPCs have the opportunity of creating bridges between warring parties. van Tongeren (2011, p.23) states that LPCs “can fill a void in dispute resolution in local governance and are particularly effective during transitional periods.” He notes that LPCs in Wajir district of Kenya and Northern Ghana successfully worked well to militate against violence. Thus, it is clear that although LPCs have challenges, they are potential game changers if opportunities at their disposal are fully utilized.

van Tongeren (2013, p.40) points out that informal peace committees are primarily driven by their host communities and can have a good working relationship with some government institutions without enjoying official recognition from the state. In Seke district, although informal peace committees are

driven by Ward 8 they have good working relationship with the Ministries of Youth and Women's Affairs in Mashonaland east province, hence, the need for informal peace committees to be mainstreamed. There are merits advanced in the current study that warrant the need for mainstreaming informal peace committees. Some of the merits include that informal peace committees are known for representing various interests groups existing in a particular community (Ahmad *et al.*, 2013, p.104). The representation of various interest groups finds expression in the inclusiveness, ownership and consensus which characterize informal peace committees. The critical component of inclusiveness is participation of every stakeholder in the process and activities. Ownership here relates to the propensity by stakeholders to take responsibility to support the operations and sustain the continual existence of the peace structure. Ownership is sustained by consensus which as Clark *et al* (2009, p.143) notes is different from majority rule. Martinez and Montero (2007, p.204) argues that majority rule is the adoption of the opinion of a larger number of people comprising a group as binding, thus undermining the opinions of the minority. Because such a decision is not based on agreement by all group members, Martinez and Montero (2007) argue strongly therefore that, consensus remains a fiasco. Thus, building on consensus, ownership and consensus decision making this study argues that mainstreaming informal peace committee in Zimbabwe can help to strengthen the work that informal peace committees are currently doing.

Another merit of informal peace committees is their capacity to address peace challenges affecting their communities. Garcia (1997, p. 223) identifies zones of peace in the Philippines with a view to assess their effectiveness in addressing peace challenges that were bedeviling local communities there. She contends that zones of peace in the Philippines became a game changer because in a situation that was characterized by violent conflict, local communities were able to “overcame helplessness and hopelessness, creating space for dialogue, establishing connection between local and national peace efforts” and concludes that zones of peace helped to create “conditions that increase the chances for a just and durable peace” (Garcia, 1997, p.223). Through their initiatives, zones of peace helped communities to mitigate violence by declaring their communities as violence-free zones and it was done through concerted efforts by various stakeholders their communities. These peace efforts are understood by Suurmond and Sharma (2013, p.4) as peace services.

Suurmond and Sharma (2013, p.4) assert that peace services “are services offered by peace providers, with the goal of addressing peace needs.” Peace services include dialogue, facilitation, mediation, and mediation among other services. Thus, LPCs squarely fall under the category of peace providers in that they provide mediation and facilitation services to ensure that peace challenges are addressed. At one of the five day CPMRT workshops that I participated in, in May 2015, participants defined dialogue as a

process involving the exchanging of ideas between conflictants with a view to identify alternatives. We noted that through dialogue bridges of confidence and trust are built because the process aims to understand the position of the other party to a conflict from which the parties can compare their ideas. We also noted that the major driving force for dialogue is not just to find a solution to a conflict but also to talk about sticking issues and coming up with relevant approaches that may lead to the resolution of the conflict. These views are echoed by Austin *et al* (2012, p.28) who pointed out that dialogue is one of the constructive tools of dealing with conflict situations in which the parties honestly exchange their views to chart a future characterized by co-existence, respect and trust and these ingredients play a crucial role in sustaining peace between individuals and groups.

van Tongeren (2012, p.107) proposes that in many countries where citizens have felt neglected and abandoned “they created informal peace committees... and these have opened dialogue, solved community conflicts and protected communities from violence” as was the case in the Philippines, Colombia and Kenya among other examples. Thus, building on the capacities of informal LPCs to provide peace services such as dialogue, facilitation, mediation it is hoped that transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding will help to legitimize and strengthen their work as peace providers.

Yet again, another merit is that peace committees often serve as the bridge on the disconnection between state and local justice system. In Kenya’s example, the Wajir peace committees bridged the disconnection that existed between state justice and clan justice models. In other words, the customary values and cosmopolitan values were mediated through peace committees thereby bridging the gap between the two justice models (Odendaal, 2010, p.40). In the case of Zimbabwe where there is a yearning for national healing and reconciliation after a violent electoral conflict (GPA, 2008, p.1), there is need to bridge cosmopolitan and customary systems of conflict resolution. The Rwandan case serves as a textbook example of this model where customary and contemporary peacebuilding justice models merged in order to chart a better future (Werner, 2010, p.61). Thus, in Zimbabwe the mainstreaming of informal peace committees can be one route to merging macro and micro peacebuilding frameworks especially at this point in time when Zimbabwe is looking forward to implementing the NPRC for the next 10 years beginning in 2013.

3.5 Possibilities of formalising informal LPCs

This section examines possibilities of transforming informal institutions such as peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding. Formalisation is taken to mean the extent to which an informal structure

becomes part of the national mandate although they can be driven by the community (van Tongeren, 2013, p.40). By advocating for the formalization of informal peace committees, this study is coming from the point of view that peace, like development, begins at local community level not the other way round. Informal peace committees by virtue of their closeness to people at the grassroots, they are better placed in terms of mobilizing communities to take an active role to respond to peace challenges affecting their well-being. Thus, their role as a steering committee that drives the interests of the community at the grassroots to work together is not a far-fetched assumption. There is a lot that can be learnt from Kenya and Rwanda examples partly because they have made a marked success in transforming informal institutions into mainstream peacebuilding. These examples are examined below.

3.5.1 Njuri ncheke in Kenya

Njuri ncheke is an informal institution that has yet to become a formal civic association enjoying official recognition in Meru area of Kenya. *Njuri ncheke*, translated as a council of elders, existed in the 19th century before colonialism. Historically, it was known for adjudicating local disputes. However, it suffered major setbacks during colonialism following its ban by the colonial power but was resuscitated by local community members in the 1930s. After the independence of Kenya, the *njuri* collaborated with the civil associations enjoying formal recognition like the Family Planning Association of Kenya to counter genital mutilation on the girl child and together they made some relative successes (Orvis, 2001, p.30).

Subsequently, in the late 1990s, *njuri* transformed into a self-help group and it raised school fees and engaged in community water projects in the Meru area. In similar style, *Njuri ncheke* provided facilitation on negotiations which proved fruitful between Somali ethnic groups in Boran and it appears that after these achievements *njuri ncheke* attracted the attention of some elites in the Kenyan government and since then about three attempts to transform it into a formal association have been made. The first attempt involved creating of formal structures. The second attempt involved writing of a constitution that helps to regulate the activities of the self-help group. The third attempt involved registering the informal association as a civil society organization (CSO) (Orvis, 2001, p.34).

There are various reasons owing to attempts to the formalization of *njuri*. The major ones are *Njuri* is built on Meru traditions and therefore it enjoys legitimacy to the host community. Apart from that, it has become a conduit for locally-based self-funded development projects and has always provided platforms for conflict resolution. One of its key result areas has been that it has played the advocacy role for local community members. Building on these merits, Orvis (2001) argues that *njuri ncheke* should therefore

enjoy official recognition from the state as a CSO. He suggests that although these self-help groups operate as informal at local level they should be applauded that they “pursue group interests achieving some type of participation and accountability” (ibid, p.33), thus enhancing the well-being of the community. Orvis (2001, p.34) argues for the prominence of informal structures in pursuance of community interests and conclude that on that basis they should enjoy official recognition from the state. The *njuri ncheke* case sheds light into possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into formal. The first attempt involved the setting up of a structure; informal peace committees in Zimbabwe seem to have passed the first stage because they already have structures which are recognized by communities that put them in place. In the second stage, that of writing constitutions, some informal peace committees in Zimbabwe have already travelled this route some are still planning to write their constitutions. In the case of Ward 8, the peacebuilding constitution is already in place and the major hurdle is that there has not been any plan to register the WPC as a CSO since it still operates under the supervision of the parent organization.

3.5.2 The Wajir peace and development committee

In Kenya, peace committees started off as an informal institution but from 2005 onwards, it has enjoyed legal backing (Odendaal, 2010, p.40). The existence of the Wajir peace and development committees was a wake-up call for local and national authorities who demanded coordination and formalization of all peacebuilding activities in the district (Adan and PKalya, 2006, p.13).

As a result, government formalized LPCs in 2001 through the establishment of the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (Odendaal, 2010, p.39). The National Steering Committee formulated a policy which saw the creation of LPCs in five more districts. The national policy which laid ground rules for dealing with intra/inter-clan cattle rustling related conflicts was named the Modogashe Declaration but later renamed the Garissa Declaration in 2005.

Peace committees contributed significantly in reducing violence between 2007 and 2008. According to Odendaal (2010, p.40), during the period to electoral violence between 2007 and 2008, districts with peace committees experienced reduced cases of violence compared to the 15 districts which had no standing peace committees. The reduced cases of violence in places with existing peace committees was the impetus behind the setting up of peace committees in places like the Rift Valley which experienced unprecedented levels of electoral violence between 2007 and 2008. Such precedence clearly indicates that peace committees contributed significantly in managing ethnic conflicts, inter-community conflict and in

reducing violence in some districts in Kenya. Thus, peace committees have helped to bring together local and national stakeholders to collaborate in peacebuilding.

Overall, despite difficulties and setbacks in contributing towards peacebuilding and the formalization process of peace committees into mainstream policy and practice, the National Steering Committee was transformed in 2010, into the new constitution into becoming “the national coordination agency for peacebuilding and conflict prevention” (Odendaal, 2010, p.40). On the basis of the Wajir model which was transformed into a national peace framework, it can be argued that Zimbabwe can take a similar route using the NPRC as a conduit to transform informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding. Thus, the majority of informal peace committees which are currently being supervised by parent organizations can fall directly under the NPRC. The important thing about informal peace committees is that they are better placed to carry forward the values of reconciliation and healing that underpin the NPRC. The *gacaca* court in Rwanda is another example of possibilities to transforming informal institution into mainstream peacebuilding (Werner, 2010, p.61).

3.5.3 The *gacaca* court in Rwanda

Gacaca was a traditional conflict-handling mechanism which focused on land and other minor disputes such as property rights, livestock, marriage, succession, fighting and many more conflicts at the community level (Mibenge, 2004, p.3; Uvin, 2000, p.3). According to Wojowska (2006, p.27), (cited in Allen and Macdonald, 2013, p.8) *gacaca* was a traditional mechanism that officially became “part of the post-conflict justice policy and granted a central role as part of the formal state system.” Murithi established that the use of a *gacaca* court to address contemporary conflicts is a textbook example of possibilities of transforming informal institutions into mainstream peacebuilding (2006, p.16).

Thus, traditional *gacaca* courts in Rwanda became a “new *gacaca* ...incorporating a contemporary legislative framework derived from Rwanda’s Penal Code, as well as international conventions to which Rwanda is a party, such as the Geneva Conventions and the Genocide Convention” (Mibenge, 2004, p.3). Werner (2010, p.61) also acknowledge that *gacaca* court was “transformed into a peacebuilding mechanism” and it has now been transformed into mainstream peacebuilding.

Allen and Macdonald (2013, p.1) assert that: “since the mid-1990s, there has been a proliferation of attempts to adapt and institutionalize forms of traditional justice as part of post-conflict policy.” As a matter of policy and practice, these indigenous conflict handling mechanism have been tried in post-conflict situations such as Timor Leste, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Rwanda. Uvin (2000, p.1) believes

that there is a deliberate shift in the contemporary world from the use of truth commissions or criminal courts in post-conflict situations because these state driven institutions are closely connected to the state authority. Rather, the emphasis now is on indigenous institutions believed to be locally-based and stable especially considering that their existence can be traced to pre-colonial era and are community-based (Boege, 2011, pp.450-453). Building on the cases above, this study lobbies for the transformation of informal LPCs into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

3.6 The case for mainstreaming informal LPCs in Zimbabwe

The NPRC of Zimbabwe was designed to serve as a peacebuilding mechanism to address the legacy of electoral violence as well as charting a preferred peaceful future (section 252, items: c, d, g). In order to evaluate this peacebuilding mechanism it is appropriate to reflect on the objectives of the NPRC. However, it is not possible to include all the objectives outlined under section 252; nevertheless, those deemed relevant to the current study are listed below.

- a) To ensure post-conflict justice, healing, and reconciliation;
- b) To develop and implement programmes to promote national healing, unity and cohesion in Zimbabwe and the peaceful resolution of disputes;
- c) To bring about national reconciliation by encouraging people to tell the truth about the past and facilitating the making of amends and provision of justice;
- d) To develop procedures and institutions at a national level to facilitate dialogue among political parties, communities, organisations, and other groups, in order to prevent conflicts and disputes arising in the future;
- e) To develop mechanisms for early detection of areas of potential conflicts and disputes, and to take appropriate preventive measures;
- f) To do anything incidental to the prevention of conflict and the promotion of peace.

As evidence indicates, the NPRC derives its power from the Constitution of Zimbabwe and its aim is to achieve healing, reconciliation and cohesion within Zimbabwe, as desired outcomes. These peaceable values: healing, reconciliation and cohesion are critical aspects of a peaceful Zimbabwe. The question to ask is: whether the NPRC as a national I4P will achieve its objectives or not?

However, a closer analysis of the objectives of the NPRC indicates some gaps in the national I4P of Zimbabwe. These are they:

- Community-based peacebuilding face challenges because they have not been recognized in the NPRC;

- LPCs as direct response to peace challenges in communities face challenges because they have not been given recognition;
- The role of chiefs and village heads in the NPRC have not been given recognition in spite of their centrality to community justice, healing, reconciliation and cohesion;
- Ministers of religion have not been given official recognition in the NPRC;
- VPCs have not been given full recognition in spite of the mention of communities;
- Local CSOs face challenges because they have not been officially recognized as actors in the NPRC

The seemingly basic driving principle that underlies the NPRC approach to peacebuilding is the macro-driven peacebuilding policy, “pro-peace policies” as put forward by Dube and Makwerere (2012, p.304). In the macro-driven peacebuilding, the responsibility to deal with the legacy of violent conflict, as is often the case in the NPRC, is on the government’s shoulders and this stands the danger of undermining bottom-up peacebuilding. In short, a macro-peacebuilding approach towards conflict of all kinds is embodied in the NPRC. Nevertheless, it is plausible to know that the government of Zimbabwe is striving to achieve “the restoration of a functioning community” (Odendaal and Olivier, 2008, p.24) through the promotion of healing and reconciliation. However, Odendaal and Olivier (2008, p.13) laments the attitude that is prevalent in some national governments to advance post-conflict justice, healing and reconciliation. They believe that this attitude negates efforts by local communities which are better placed to advance the values of reconciliation and healing at grassroots levels. Odendaal and Olivier suggested that governments should provide the legal and policy frameworks for peacebuilding programmes to create an enabling environment for community-based peacebuilding to take off.

In view of that, this study posed a question as to why local communities in Zimbabwe could not use what they already have and know in order to achieve the much needed national reconciliation and even more important, is for the government of Zimbabwe to find ways of enhancing existing local resources such as *matare emhosva* and informal LPCs so that they can more effectively help to achieve the aspirations reflected in the NPRC. At community level, peacebuilding processes involve mechanisms such as customary courts and peace committees which are not meant to eliminate conflict but to work out solutions from a conflict situation without the use of violence.

In view of the identified gaps in the NPRC, this study recommends the following peacebuilding framework to address those gaps:

- Peacebuilding should be defined as involving relationship building and the improvement of livelihoods using local resources in Zimbabwe;

- NPRC should foster inward-looking peacebuilding strategies which should be augmented with contemporary peacebuilding strategies;
- Indigenous approaches to conflict in Zimbabwe should be given 100 per cent recognition in future. This recognition will ensure that customary approaches and LPCs are not overshadowed by macro-driven approaches;
- Make it mandatory for traditional chiefs to participate fully in the national healing and reconciliation agenda using relevant indigenous approaches to healing and reconciliation;
- Section 252 can be amended to incorporate the role of VPCs in the national healing and reconciliation;
- Make it mandatory for ministers of religion and village assemblies to set up VPCs as direct response to peace challenges;
- VPCs should have a mandate to preside over conflicts that occur in their villages;

Since the focus of this study is on informal LPCs, this study lobbied for the transformation of peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding as one of the starting points to involve local communities in the NPRC. Adan and Pklya (2006, p.15) argue that peace committees are timely and useful a hybrid approach to contemporary conflicts. Thus, the route to engage LPCs should not be considered as a backward-looking strategy as captured by Odendaal (2010, p.40), that peace committees often serve as bridges, linking state and clan models of justice. In the Kenyan example, the government acknowledged the utility of peace committees in bridging the disconnection that existed between state justice and clan models (Adan and Pklya, 2006, p.15). Thus, in Zimbabwe, the transformation of informal peace committees can be a good starting point to embrace traditional and cosmopolitan values which are often mediated through peace committees thereby bridging the gap between the two justice models.

Having said this, the current study proposes two options to transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The first option is to invoke section 252 (g) of the constitution of Zimbabwe, which says: *to develop mechanisms for early detection areas of potential conflict and disputes and to take appropriate preventive measures*. Informal peace committees fall squarely to this section in that primarily they are mechanisms for peacebuilding and prevention of conflict which are major key result areas for peace committees. As such, invoking this section helps to establish legitimacy for all informal peace committees so that they can enjoy official recognition. The 10 years imposes limits on the realization of the values of peace namely; reconciliation and healing. However, the mainstreaming of informal peace committees informal can help to sustain the values of healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe for several decades because informal peace committees are naturally formed by communities with the potential to outlive the NPRC which is soon to expire in 2024.

The second option is for government or parent organizations to facilitate the registration of informal peace committees through the route of CSOs as was the case with *Njuri ncheke* in Kenya. In Zimbabwe, most informal organizations that required official recognition have taken the route to register as trust organizations. Using Lederach's (1997, p.39) elite, middle range and grassroots leadership model, this study argues that it is the district peace committee that falls squarely with middle range leadership. Thus the setting up of district peace committees can potentially act as conduits to link grassroots with elites, in particular the NPRC. This study suggests that there is need to establish district peace committees which should act as conduits for VPCs. A district is closer to villages than a province and so the district peace committee is the one that should be registered as CSO in particular as a peace trust. If the district peace committee in Seke is to be registered, it could be called: *Seke Community Peace Trust*. The goal of registering district peace committees as trust organizations is to ensure that informal peace committees in Zimbabwe become part of the national agenda enshrined in the NPRC and to extend the life span of the NPRC beyond 10 years.

The composition of the district peace committee should be made up of individuals that are already connected to existing networks. For purposes of this study, these should include the district administrator, the chief, a representative from the Ministry of youth, Ministry of women's affairs, minister of religion, police force and civic organization representative. A committee of seven was considered a standard structure by the majority of the WPC members in ward 8 of Seke district.

The composition of this peace structure fits closely with Lederach's (1997, p.39) model of middle range leaders as links or focal persons with the capacity to connect grassroots to the national agenda, that is, the NPRC. For example, the district administrator is directly linked to government as well as traditional leadership and thus, his/her position in the district peace committee makes it possible for the informal peace committee to be connected to the elites. (For steps for transforming informal LPCs into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe, see Appendix 9). The argument for mainstreaming informal peace committees emanates from the peacebuilding initiatives which were championed by the disbanded ONHRI. As mentioned above, ONHRI collaborated with ECLF through the PBIASL and one of its objectives was to build; *national capacities for dialogue, peacebuilding, prevention, management and resolution of conflict strengthened*. These peacebuilding initiatives bred the NPRC which is currently in the hands of the government. This study therefore argues that communities in Zimbabwe should not be regarded as clients in the national healing and reconciliation rather they should participate as partners not clients.

Anderson and McFarlane's (2000, p.159) provides a helpful model for the involvement of communities in the NPRC. In their book: *Community as partner*' they argued from a public health point of view in which community activities, and functions were perceived as critical in the realization of a health people. In their argument, they proposed that in order to improve the health status of people, there is need to acknowledge that communities have their own established ways of promoting health practices to ensure their people are free from diseases and ailments. They concluded that in the health profession communities are regarded as partners not clients on healthy matters. Their point was health practitioners are to involve communities as active participants in the planning, implementation and practice of health matters such as disease prevention and the promotion of healthy habits.

These principles apply also to peacebuilding as understood in this study. In some sense, this model suggests that the values of national healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe cannot be a preserve of the state. In other words, treating villages as clients can be detrimental to the realization of these critical values of national reconciliation. By implication, government should find a way of collaborating with communities to ensure that national healing and reconciliation currently being advanced by the NPRC is realized. The major reason for collaborating with villages is that villages have their own established ways of promoting and sustaining healing and reconciliation already and these indigenous approaches should be acknowledged and figure out how they can be utilized rather than discarded. This therefore suggests that there is a need to perceive and consider villages as partners in the NPRC agenda if sustainable peace is to be realized in Zimbabwe.

Further, Anderson and McFarlane (2000, p.159) argued that community life is built around values, beliefs and traditions. On this basis, this study argues that people derive their peacebuilding potential from their values, beliefs and traditions (for details on Shona peaceable values, see Chapter Four). In addition, communities have well-established ways of promoting peace as well as violence avoidance strategies. Shona people have *matare emhosva* at village level and peace committees in the contemporary Zimbabwe; Ndebele people have *inkudhla* while *Ngbanga* is for the Azande of South Sudan. These indigenous methods are considered conventional methods bent on promoting peacebuilding in their host communities. The fact that communities have indigenous capacities of dealing with threats to peace at village level suggests that they cannot be considered as clients in matters to do with peacebuilding but should be active participants in any peacebuilding process if peace is to be achieved. As noted in Chapter One above, the availability of customary courts is a clear indication that communities have response mechanisms to any threat to peace. These response mechanisms are designed to mitigate conflict and

violence. In the current study, informal peace committees fall squarely with response mechanisms because they are established by communities to meet the needs of the host community.

What is clear in the foregoing discussion is that communities have their own established ways of promoting and sustaining peace and for that reason they should be accorded the status of partners. However, although evidence has shown that communities are susceptible to external influence owing to violent political systems that is not to say that community systems are dead and buried there is always hope that communities can recover because their defence mechanisms are natural and in-built. The *njuri ncheke* in Kenya represents this model that communities will always survive the ashes of defeat at the long last. Peace committees which bridges traditional and contemporary methods of peacebuilding have emerged and are increasingly gathering momentum in Zimbabwe. Thus, their involvement in the NPRC in Zimbabwe can be a worthwhile investment considering that communities are permanent and durable compared to political systems which keeps on changing every now and then. On the basis of this argument, this study concludes that, the government of Zimbabwe should consider mainstreaming informal peace committees because they are response mechanisms by communities to peace challenges. This is discussed in detail below.

3.7 Chapter summary

This chapter was divided into three sections. The first examined the features of communities in transition as analytical tools to determine how local communities respond when faced with external forces such as political systems. It explored the impact of external forces on local community and people and illustrated that communities are not passive when confronted with conflict and violence as they already have response mechanisms to sustain their well-being. The second section examined the means by which peace can be built in local communities. Using case studies, I have examined sport; football events; entrepreneurial activities and informal peace committees as mechanisms that are increasingly gathering momentum in contemporary peacebuilding. The third section explored the peace committee framework focusing especially on informal peace committees. The study established that informal LPCs are one of the contemporary response mechanisms by local communities to mitigate the impact of conflict and violence. On the basis of these merits, this study proposed for the transformation of informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding. This study has made a proposal that district peace committees should be put in place and be registered as community peace trusts as a way of formalizing them. The district peace committee were seen as better placed to link grassroots with elites in order to drive the values of the NPRC at community level. The chapter concluded that communities in Zimbabwe should not be considered as clients for the national healing and reconciliation but as partners because peace

committees are among the many response mechanisms at community level that helps to address peace challenges.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines peacebuilding, indigenous knowledge theories and the asset-based model. These theories were employed as analytical tools for the WPC which was put in place in Ward 8 of Seke district with a view to establish the contributions of informal peace committees to peacebuilding. The integration of indigenous and contemporary methods to address peace challenges affecting local communities is gathering momentum not only in Africa but also in many different parts across the globe. The integration of theories is closely linked to existing literature which asserts that in modern Africa, indigenous knowledge is still an important driving force for modern peacebuilding activities (Haverkort *et al*, 2003). This study was conducted in line with current peacebuilding programming at local communities which assumes that informal peace LPCs in post-conflict situations can contribute towards peace.

4.2 Peacebuilding theory

Peacebuilding gained traction into policy and practice after the end of Cold War (Ghali, 1992, para.21). Since then, myriad definitions on peacebuilding have emerged and even until today the definitions of peacebuilding cannot be limited to a specific number (Haugerudbraaten, 1998, p.1; Pugh, 2000, p.16; Barnett *et al.*, 2007, p.36). Despite the many definitions that have been proffered, conventionally, peacebuilding has been described as an approach that seeks to resolve conflict without the use of violence (Haugerudbraaten, 1998, p.2).

However, at the heart of peacebuilding, resolution of conflict is not the first and foremost aim as the above statement seems to suggest. To assert that peacebuilding is mainly about resolving conflict excludes other basic elements of peacebuilding such as improvement of livelihoods and community development. Indeed, peacebuilding is about improving relationships and repairing distressed relationships (Lederach, 1997, p.21) but it also extends to addressing issues affecting the well-being of individuals and groups and the development of modalities to ensure access to sufficient food and other basic necessities. This study has worked with the idea that peace should be built with due regard to preventing and resolving conflict as well as the creation of mechanisms to maintain trust, cooperation, improving livelihoods and to build positive social relationships between individuals and groups. Without these, communities, households, individuals and groups are not building peace at all.

Nonetheless, while the definition of peacebuilding remains imprecise, there are basic concepts such as conflict, violence and peace, which help to clarify what sometimes seems to be a bewildering array of information on the concept of peacebuilding.

4.2.1 Conflict, violence and peace

Available literature indicates that peacebuilding is embraced when the following phenomenon crops up either independently of each other or simultaneously: conflict and/or violence. Conflict is “one of those concepts that is not easy to define because it is complex and diverse” (Chivasa and Mutswanga, 2014, p.680). This is so because individuals and groups perceive and label conflict differently. Chivasa and Mutswanga (*ibid.*, p.681) have identified 31 terms and phrases associated with conflict among the Shona people and this points to the elusiveness of the concept of conflict.

In spite of its elusiveness, there is extensive literature which confirms that there are common elements that cut across the various labels associated with conflict, namely, incompatible behaviours, values, beliefs and interests involving individuals and groups (Adler and Towne, 1990, p.355; Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000, p.13; Fisher et al., 2000, p.8; Reyckler and Paffenholz, 2001, p.5; Warner, 2001, p.14). The above authors have built their concept of conflict around the idea of incompatibilities existing between two or more parties.

While incompatibilities involving the behaviour, values or interests of individuals or groups (to not provide an exhaustive list) are important features of conflict, they do not fully give a full picture of the essence of conflict. In other words, to describe conflict as incompatibilities suggests that conflict is just a mere disagreement in terms of behaviours, interests or values. In other quarters, conflict is not described as mere disagreements. It is described as a situation in which the parties to a conflict perceive as a threat to their individual or group well-being (Tillett, 1999, p.2; Troyer and Younggreen, 2009, p.412). In that sense, once a conflict situation occurs, the parties tend to respond on the basis of their individual or group perceptions, expression and interpretation of the situation. This state of affairs is further compounded by the values, beliefs, experience, gender and a host of other variables, such as how conflict is expressed, interpreted and perceived by people in a particular culture, through which the parties filter the conflict at hand (Lederach, 1995, p.40).

However, many authorities attest to the notion that by its very nature conflict, has a bearing on people's concept of trust, and their perception of each other. The point is conflict shatters social ties, trust and

friendliness that bind people together reducing opportunities for cooperation and co-existence (Adler and Towne, 1990, p.355; Tillett 1999b, p.159; Isenhardt and Spangle, 2000, p.13; Warner, 2001, p.14).

Gravingholt *et al* (2009, p.9) point out that conflict provides the context for peacebuilding in that peacebuilding seeks to enhance and restore existing social ties, trust, friendliness and bonds between individuals and groups (Schirch, 2004, p.18), which Fred-Mensah (2004) describes as social capital (for a detailed discussion on social capital see Chapter Eight below). This process of enhancing and restoring relationships is the basis of peacebuilding. Thus, peacebuilding does not seek to eliminate conflict but to work out solutions from a conflict situation without the use of violence.

Violence does not erupt from a vacuum, habitually, it occurs against the backdrop of a conflicted situation. Violence in the words of Fisher *et al* (2000, p.4) “consists of actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social and environmental damage.” In conflict situations, it is the deterioration of social capital which often exacerbates the different forms of violence (Fred-Mensah, 2004; 2008, p.4). I add my voice to this view that violence is an indicator of failed relationships and illustrates with observations made by Sathiparsad and Gray (1998, p.182) that violence is a consequence of the inability by individuals/communities to handle conflict in a way that does not hurt others. Within this framework, Fisher *et al* (2000, p.4) argue that there is habitual connection between peace, conflict and violence but concluded that they are not the same. They argue that peace is ruptured when violence takes precedence, thus, emphasizing the point that conflict is not an anti-thesis of peace. In fact, a peace does not mean the absence of conflict situations but it is how conflict is addressed and the propensity to prevent conflict from taking a violent route that comprise peace. Thus, the resolution of conflict is a critical component in peacebuilding.

4.2.2 Peacebuilding and conflict resolution

According to Tillett (1999, p.1), conflict resolution “is a multi-disciplinary, analytical, problem-solving approach to conflict that seeks to enable the participants to work collaboratively towards its resolution.” With multi-disciplinary is meant the principles that underlie conflict resolution are drawn from various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology or psychology and peace studies. Conflict resolution, as an analytical process, suggests that there is no manual for dealing with conflict. In other words, conflict resolution calls for the use of a multiplicity of perspectives to gain entry into a conflict situation.

Apart from that, conflict resolution as a problem-solving approach suggests that the parties to a conflict attempt to meet their needs simultaneously by coming up with a compromising solution. This aspect

brings into perspective that conflictants need to work collaboratively in order to have their needs met. Further, Tillett (1999, p.3) highlights that conflict resolution involves skills such as negotiation and mediation. By implication, conflict resolution requires the services of the parties to a conflict, arbitrators and mediators. Arbitrators and mediators help in the reframing of the parties positions and to develop a common goal which satisfies the parties to a conflict. As mentioned already, while the resolution of conflict is an important function of peacebuilding that is not its sole purpose.

Reychler and Paffenholz (2001, p.12) also stress the connection between peacebuilding and conflict resolution but go on to say that: “through peacebuilding conflict is not only resolved” but relationships are transformed. Commenting on the transformation of the relationship between conflictants, Paul Lederach (cited in Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009, p.170) point out that peacebuilding is the building of relationships that promotes cooperative interactions (characterized by trust and reciprocity). This thinking shows that peacebuilding does not seek to eliminate conflict but to promote cooperation between conflictants, given that conflict is a special form of non-cooperative behaviour. Cooperative behaviour is superior to non-cooperative interaction and conflict resolution seeks to promote cooperation between conflicting parties so that the outcome of conflict satisfies the parties concerned. As noted above, to consider peacebuilding only as the resolution of conflict suggests that peacebuilding can be pursued leaving out of all the other elements such as community development.

4.2.3 Peacebuilding and community development

O’Brien (2007, p.115) notes that peacebuilding also includes community development initiatives. That there are points of convergence between conflict resolution and community development was strongly argued by O’Brien (*ibid.*, p.124). Community development is premised on the participation of individuals and groups in bringing about positive change. Similarly, conflict resolution entirely depends on the participation of the parties in shaping the outcome of a conflict. Both processes are fundamentally focused on people-driven participatory approaches. Stakeholders in Ward 8 linked peacebuilding with conflict resolution and community development in that peace was seen as a precondition for community development. Similarly, community development was seen as the end result after conflict resolution which was seen as the creation of an enabling environment for community development to take place. To this end, it can be argued that peacebuilding encompasses nonviolent resolution of conflict and the creation of an enabling environment for individual and groups to participate in order to bring about positive change that helps them to meet their contextual aspirations. Since peacebuilding concerns people who hold certain attitudes, beliefs, relationships, behaviours, social norms and values (McCandless *et al.*,

2007, p.43), it is critically important for the current study to examine how culture influences peacebuilding initiatives.

4.2.4 Peacebuilding and culture

As mentioned above, conflict, occurs and is shaped by cultural contexts. Thus, culture plays a critical role in terms of how conflicts are addressed (Villa-Vicencio, 2009, p.27). Schaefer (2010, p.499) asserts that: “peacebuilding without cultural sensitivity is empty; cultural sensitivity without cosmopolitan values is blind.” Thus, in a country with a large number of rural people like Zimbabwe, there are compelling cultural elements for peacebuilding. For example, culture among the Shona people is always a key aspect in processes involving the resolution of conflict and the promotion of reconciliation.

Lambourne (2004, p.8) argues that approaches to reconciliation are determined by religious beliefs as well as social systems. He highlights that different cultures have different practices, in terms of how they approach and understand reconciliation. Some culture demands public apology, others payment of reparations and still other cultures demand forgiveness without reparations. In other words, culture affects the way a particular people group understands and achieves reconciliation. For instance, among the traditional Shona, “public reconciliation between litigants” involves a communal meal and in other cases public confession/apology” (Kuper, Hughes and van Velsen, 1954, p.30). Thus, how reconciliation is achieved through *matare emhosva* in Shona communities is profoundly influenced by culture. The important thing about culture is that conflict, violence and peace are culturally conditioned and therefore culture becomes a resource for peacebuilding initiatives.

At the village level, peacebuilding is founded on the following components: compelling indigenous problem-solving institutions; equal participation of the parties in shaping the outcome of a conflict and reconciliation between erstwhile enemies. A review of Shona reconciliatory strategies reveals how peacebuilding is embraced at village levels as illustrated by models 1 and 2.

Model 1: *Kubata makuku tradition (to catch the chicken)*

- *Kubata makuku* is a process involving the admission of guilt that one has committed an offence. The offender secures a chicken for relish which is prepared with stiff porridge and it is shared at a communal meal among the disputants and arbitrators. This tradition is still being practiced in rural areas today;
- The process is a concrete token of admission of guilt by the offender (Hannan, 1996, p.320);

- The arbitrators participate in a meal after the settlement of a conflict. *Kubata makuku* conveys that erstwhile enemies have considered forgiveness and reconciliation as the best option and that there would be no more squabbles or fighting.
- Participation in the meal is punctuated by sermons of good will and tolerance by the arbitrator(s). Any other relatives present say words that discourage fighting, words of advice for positive relationships, tolerance and mutual understanding.

Thus, among the Shona reconciliation involves admission of guilt by the offender and the granting of forgiveness by the offended resulting in the parties coming together and dining together as evidence that the former disputants have considered reconciliation as an option. Public confession, shown in model 2 is one of the critical aspects of reconciliation in Shona communities.

Model 2: *Public confession*

- In rural Shona communities, if an individual has engaged in some action considered as anti-social such as adultery, stealing or scolding an ascendant s/he must confess.
- Admission of guilt alone is considered insufficient; it has to be accompanied by public confession. Apology is construed as an acknowledgement of one's wrong doing and a sign of penitence.
- Public apology provides assurance to community members that the former erstwhile enemies have yielded to the public appeal for forgiveness and the common good of the community;
- Confession is seen as a building block for the restoration of social harmony (Holleman, 1952, p.220, 232; Gelfand, 1965, pp.91-92).

Although these models (1 and 2) are culture specific, this study argues that their space should not be violated because they are critical building blocks for peace in their host communities. In other words, contemporary peacebuilding that fail to acknowledge cultural models at village level may run the risk of creating gaps between what is already known and what can be construed as blueprints for peace. Thus, cultural norms and values play a significant role in either promoting or hindering peacebuilding processes. Since culture falls with the realm of indigenous knowledge, this discussion now turns to look at indigenous knowledge framework.

4.3 Indigenous knowledge (IK) framework

IK is an umbrella concept for practices, skills, customs, worldviews among other elements, held by a particular group of people (Horsthemke, 2008, p.134). Gupta (2011, p.58) describes indigenous knowledge as the intangible elements of culture. Robert Chambers and colleagues described IK as

traditional techniques, culturally-based and creative lore of the local people (cited in Briggs, 2005a, p.100; 2005b, p.4; Hagar, 2003, p.337). These authorities suggest that IK is a whole range of skills, social norms, values and practices of a particular group of people which can be classified as data; information; experiences; belief system or facts that have been handed down from past generations.

In academic circles, the study and concept of IK is a recent one. It traces its roots to the 1960s and 1970s but its manifestation in various local contexts can be traced back to the origins of humankind (Horsthemke, 2008, p.131). In the 1990s, IK framework became part of mainstream development (Briggs, 2005a, 108) against the backdrop of exclusive application of western knowledge systems in developing countries (Briggs and Sharp, 2004, p.663). Of interest to this study, is the intent not to romanticize IK or to condemn western knowledge as hegemonic, but to blend positive elements inherent in these two knowledge systems. As such, IK remains relevant and a suitable knowledge source for modern peacebuilding initiatives. This is so because there is valuable knowledge passed down from past generations relating to conflict resolution, agriculture, meteorology, ecology, medicine, architecture and food technology, among other domains. This reality is the impetus to consider IK as another source of knowledge for peacebuilding initiatives (Briggs, 2005a, p.103; Briggs and Sharp, 2004, p.666). Aikman (2011, p.17) points out that although the majority of modern people no longer practice extensive hunting, shifting cultivation or ancestor veneration, they still hold on to some basic elements of indigenous value system or beliefs. For instance, Shona people are still using *matare emhosva* to address conflict, thus enhancing the notion that the relevancy of IK to contemporary conflicts is not myth but a reality. It is the indigenous wisdom relating to peacebuilding that is of interest to the current study.

Another important aspect of IK is that it is not learnt at formal schools (Morris, undated, p.1), rather it is acquired through informal interaction both at household and community levels. Out of these learning environments, a knowledge bank involving normative behaviours, beliefs, and wisdom are developed overtime (Gupta, 2001, p.58). That this knowledge is local, shared, informal, practical, factual, dynamic and empirical is well documented (Horsthemke, 2008, p.133; Morris, undated, p.2). This study has been interested in the knowledge system involving *matare emhosva*, that is, how conflict is resolved, the promotion of reconciliation and sustenance of co-existence among other elements Shona people communities.

Typically, in *matare emhosva*, available literature (for example Kabweza, 2002; Gombe, 2006) points out that procedures and methods for addressing conflict involves negotiations which are inclusive, adaptive

and flexible. The context of *matare emhosva* is according to specific circumstances such as a household squabble, a squabble involving neighbours or boundary, a land dispute, a murder case or adultery.

The group of people involved in the diagnosis of a conflict could be large or small but generally, there should be an equal representation of relatives of both the victim and offender on the council facilitating the diagnosis of conflict (Gwaravanda, 2011, p.148). In the *dare remhosva*, both men and women participate in the process including the victim and the offender. The process of handling conflict is called debates or to play the case (*kutamba mhosva*). The entry point into Shona conflict resolution process is characterized by two incompatible stories (*nyaya/nhau/mhosva*) trying to out-argue each other (Holleman, 1955, p.45). Shona *dare remhosva* is based on equal participation in decision-making between the offender, victim and relatives of disputants together with the audience. It also involves participation of the parties to the conflict. The parties use respectful dialogue to resolve their sticking issues within the context of a face-to face conversation facilitated by presiding household head or headman. Equal participation in search of a solution to a conflict is a major element in the resolution of conflict in *dare remhosva*. The process runs predominantly in an informal process. Of critical importance to the current study is how Shona people resolve conflict that is the indigenous wisdom to bring conflictacts together, the dialogue, the facilitation process and the design of the forum that conflict should always remain a public forum is what is important in the current study.

In fact, the informal nature of the process involving members of the community suggests that the diagnosis of a conflict is not only for the select few for it is a collaborative effort. The collaborative nature of the process is a key factor for consultation. Gwaravanda (2011, p. 221) beliefs that: “consultation is based on the assumption that wisdom is not a monopoly and sharing ideas enriches individual perceptions and insights on the matter.” This knowledge system is a building block for peacebuilding even in contemporary contexts.

Another important building block for peacebuilding is that during *dare remhosva* the community has a dual role: participation in the diagnosis of the conflict to restore social harmony and reintegration of the offender back into the community. Reintegration of the offender is preceded by acknowledgement of wrongs by the offender (Reyntjens and Vandeginste, 2001, p.129; Brock-Utne, 2004, p.116). The entire process is underpinned by consensus decision making process. Clark *et al* (2009, p.75) defines consensus:

As a process for group decision-making by which an entire group of people can come to a common agreement. It is based upon listening, respect and participation between everyone. The

goal is to find a decision to which all of the group's members consent; everyone in the group is willing to support the final decision.

Thus the indigenous wisdom underlying Shona *dare remhosva* lays in its capacity to restore social relationships through collective action by the facilitator, the chief's council, disputants, their relatives and the general audience. As mentioned already, the focus is to address the wrong done in order to promote the well-being of the offender, victim and the community at large. This is demonstrated when members of the community come together for purposes of addressing the wrong done with a view to enhance social harmony. The underlying philosophy behind the resolution of conflict is that unresolved conflict can potentially degenerate disharmony. Matavire (2012, p.221) made similar points when she said:

The traditional jurisprudence accommodates and accepts that in life conflicts are inevitable parts of all human association. The system recognizes that if conflict is suppressed, it can result in stagnation and erode the bond of group solidarity because of an accumulation of hostility.

It is important to point out that in the process of addressing a particular dispute, some members of the community can potentially learn the necessity of good behaviour as a model to maintain social harmony. This puts into perspective the undeniable link between IK and peacebuilding.

The important thing to note is that *matore emhosva* are informed by peaceable values which are seen as cardinal to the well-being of the community. These peaceable values are derived from Shona traditions (see Table 2 below). Peaceable values are closely related to the concept of peace and have much to contribute to it. According to Boulding (2000, p.1), to be peaceable suggests that a particular culture inculcates values, beliefs, behaviour and institutional arrangements that appreciate, cultivate and tolerate differences and diversities that exist in mankind.

Reber-Rider (2008, p.76) points out that peaceable values are based on morals and values that are bent on securing, protecting and promoting the welfare of human life. She notes that communities that subscribes to peaceable social norms and values have the propensity to embrace diversity; co-existence and that such a community can potentially address conflict non-violently. Thus, the goal of *matore emhosva* in Shona communities is to achieve at least any one or more of the peaceable values, shown in Table 2. Shona people seem to hold to the view that peaceable values are the ones that have sustained their communities and even until today they are hopeful that generations to come should also keep themselves in step with these peaceable values.

Table 2: Shona peace values and knowledge bearers

Social norm	Derived from	Peaceable value(s)	Objective	Bearers of this knowledge
Honour your father and mother	Customary law, religious traditions	Respect, social harmony, peace	To instill cordial harmony between parents and children	Parents, community elders
Do not scold/accuse your mother	Taboos, religious traditions, folktales	Respect, tolerance, non-violence	To instill cordial harmony between children and mother	Parents, community elders
<i>Upenyu mutoro</i> (life is a formidable burden)	Folk tales, customary law	Cooperation, collectively, unity, solidarity, oneness	To instill the values of collectivity and social cohesion	Grandparents
<i>Chitema hachidzorwe</i> (do not take revenge)	Religious traditions, customary law	Non-revenge, forgiveness, reconciliation, Tolerance, accommodative	To instil positive interpersonal relationships	Parents, community
<i>Usaba</i> (do not steal)	Customary law, religious traditions, folktales	Respecting other peoples properties, co-existence,	To instil the attitude of honesty, dependability, faithfulness and trustworthiness, hard work	Parents, community
<i>Mukadzi wemumwe ndiambuya</i> (another man's wife is your mother in-law)	Customary law, folktales	Due respect to marital relations, social harmony	To uphold marriage as a sacred institution, to maintain a gap between married women and men	Community, elders
<i>Usuraya</i> (do not kill)	Customary law, religious traditions, ,	-Respect for life, treating each other as humans, cordial harmony	-To instil a culture of non-violence, the sacredness of life	Community, elders, parents
<i>Murawo ndishe</i> (customary law is the ruler of the people)	Customary law, folktales, proverbial lore	Obedience, submission, compliance, uprightness	To inculcate the notion that individual or group interests are subservient to the moral code	Community elders
<i>Usarwa nomunhu</i> (do not fight anyone)	-Customary law, religious traditions, ,	-Non-violence, tolerance, social harmony, co-existence, peace	-To instil the value of non-violence between humans, anger management	Parents, community, elders
Usatsiva (do not take any revenge)	-Customary law, religious traditions,	-Non-revenge, social harmony, forgiveness, reconciliation,	-To instil the value of non-revenge, mutual understanding	Parents, community, elders

		tolerance, peace		
<i>Seka urema wafa</i> (laugh at someone's misfortune when you are in dead)	Customary law,	Tolerance, accommodative, humility	To instil respect for people living with disabilities	Elders, parents, community

Source: Author

As shown in Table 2, Shona peaceable social norms and values are derived from customary law. Since this law is not written down, there are knowledge-bearers who are considered as a reference just as modern scholars would feel confident to open an encyclopaedia for more information. Thus, these knowledge-bearers are moving encyclopaedia with vast knowledge and experience in conflict resolution. During a conflict resolution session, the majority of these elderly people are not seen with open books in front of them for reference's sake, they just decide cases on the basis of experiential knowledge and precedents.

As shown in the Table above, the overall goals of these peaceable values is to promote peace and thus, these peaceable values serve as a Shona template for what they understand as peace. In other words, these values are veiled expressions of Shona conceptions of peace, which to a large extent repeatedly is against violence (Masaka and Chemhuru, 2011, p.134), thus enhancing the notion that Shona peaceable values are building blocks for peacebuilding. In the current study, it is the knowledge and wisdom handed down from generations that people are expected to be tolerant, respectful, forgiving and non-revengeful that is of particular importance in this regard. And for that reason, IK provides an analytical framework for this study to understand resources that are found within the Shona culture. In a sense, studying IK provides empirical insights into understanding how Shona people embrace peace through peaceable values. These values are under the custodian of community leaders, parents and elderly people residing in Shona communities.

Since peacebuilding is a cosmopolitan social activity with a flair for social change (Schaefer, 2010, p.499), adapting it does not suggest negating indigenous peaceable values. In fact, the present effort cannot, essentially, be conceived as backward-looking but is forward-looking too, in that this study seeks to figure out ways of invoking indigenous peaceable values so that they can serve as building blocks for peacebuilding in modern communities. In reality *dare remhosva* rests on an ethic of peace, love, respect and social harmony which are indigenous peaceable values. One of the major reasons why informal peace committees have gathered momentum in local communities was because they are building on these indigenous peaceable values. At the pedestal of informal peace committees are principles of negotiation, dialogue and non-violence which link squarely with *matare emhosva*. Studying Shona IK helped to

establish a black cloth for creation of a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district and this explains why IK was considered an appropriate framework for this study.

4.3.1 The relevance of IK framework to the current study

On the basis of the above merits, IK is one of the frameworks so far credited for local peacebuilding initiatives which provide a foundation for endogenous assets. Simply put, IK is considered useful for modern peacebuilding initiatives in that it is the basis upon which reconciliation, nonviolent resolution of conflict at community levels are built. Since IK was useful in promoting peacebuilding in Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda and many other parts of the world, evidence have shown that it can still be applied to modern peacebuilding initiatives. On this basis, the current study has applied insights on peacebuilding embodied in IK to test the peace committee framework in Seke district.

As a framework, IK was appropriate for the current study in that after establishing a WPC, this framework was useful in the identification of the wisdom at the disposal of the community such as the collaborative approach to conflict, dialoguing, reconciliatory strategies, and facilitation among others. In doing so, IK made a case for itself to turn away from western models of dealing with conflict. Western models of dealing with conflict have a tendency of not taking into account local knowledge of the people involved in conflict. In sum, this study found out that IK was a useful analytical tool that was aimed at establishing an informal institution building on the knowledge system of the host community. Also, the fact that peaceable values of the Shona people are based on informal sources – the current study which sought to establish an informal institution was enriched because the majority of stakeholders that I worked with in Ward 8 are ordinary people living in rural areas of Seke where customary law is their point of reference, particularly for matters relating to conflict, violence and peace. However, indigenous knowledge was not a standalone framework in the current study; I had to utilize another framework that helped me to identify strengths at the disposal of the community, that is the asset-based approach.

4.4 The asset-based model

The asset-based community development model (henceforth referred to as asset-based) is the brainchild of the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University. This critical work was developed in 1993 being propounded by John P.Kretzmann and John L. McKnight (Pinkett, 2000, p.6; Boyd et al, 2008, p.191) The asset-based is premised on the assumption that in every community there are local resources by which a community can capitalize on to advance positive change. It is an alternative to the deficient approach in which a community is perceived as a client that requires service by an external agent rather than its own resources (McCall, 2003, p.103).

In their famous book ‘Building *communities from the inside out*’ they described asset-based approach “as a process of mapping a community’s assets and mobilizing these assets to address community defined issues and problems” (Pinkett, 2000: 7). Mapping involves the creation of an inventory of the capacities of individual in terms of their relationships, skills and talents, existing associations and local institutions. Owing to this framework, the WPC was able to come up with a skills inventory for the WPC members in Ward 8 of Seke.

In addition, the asset-based framework is guided by three principles: asset-based; internally-focused and relationship-driven. In the first place, the asset-based principle “starts with people” (Checkoway, 2011, p.ii6) that is, it assumes that the process of community development should start from the experiences of local people. It was argued already that community development is one of the components under the aegis of peacebuilding. In the current study, it is the experiences of Ward 8 residents in Seke district that is of interest. In other words, this approach seeks to understand “what a particular community already knows about the subject matter” (ibid. 2011, p.ii6). In that regard, Ward 8 residents were asked about their knowledge of conflict resolution, the skills and knowledge that they already have on particular income generating projects that they were currently doing. These questions demanded a framework to help identify strengths at the disposal of peace in Ward 8 (see Appendix 14). These questions were used in order to build a skills inventory for WPC.

In the second place, the asset-based framework is guided by the principle of internally-driven (the capacity of community members to take care of community issues). In other words, this principle is premised on the assumption that a group working collectively can accomplish more than one person acting alone. To support this principle there are Shona proverbs: *zano ndega akapisa jira mumase* (mr. know-it-all burnt his blankets); *rume rimwe harikombi churu* (one man cannot encircle an anti-hill); *gumwe rimwe haritswanyi inda* (one hand will not kill a louse). These proverbs teach that success occurs only when individuals connect themselves with others. These proverbs are based on the principles of cooperation, that what is desirable for a group can be achieved if people work as a team. *Matare emhosva* are built on principles of cooperation, co-existence and cohesion. These principles could not be identified without a useful framework such as the asset-based.

Deriving inspiration from the asset-based framework, the WPC came to an understanding that people should work in groups to accomplish their aspirations thus, enhancing the notion that individuals should come together, pool their skills, resources and share information in order to achieve their peace aspirations. The propensity by individuals belonging to a particular community to work collectively is the

thrust of the asset-based approach (Bandura, 2008, p.193; Checkoway, 2011, p.ii6). The adoption of *Mukando* by the WPC can be closely linked to the asset-based framework which lobbies for group work as opposed to individual endeavours.

Third, is the principle of relationship-building which underpins the asset-based framework. As pointed out already, Shona people have their own system of relationships. These systems of relationships are sustained by a number of informal associations such as *nhimbe* (co-operatives) and kinship. When this principle is applied to peacebuilding it suggests that working for peace as a group is the practical thing because peace is dependent on group efforts. Thus, by establishing a WPC comprising of homogeneous members, the idea was to enhance existing social relationships at community level which is the basis of peacebuilding.

4.4.1 The relevance of the asset-based to the current study

Since the current study was predominantly participatory, I was looking forward to working with a small advisory team or co-researchers to create a WPC in Ward 8. For that reason, a framework was needed to help in the identification of assets that members of the peace committee already have at their disposal. This asset-based framework was instrumental for the designing of a data form which in turn helped to create a skills inventory (see data form, Appendix 14). A skills inventory “is a record system listing [peace committee] members with specific skills” (Coetzee and Schreuder, 2010, p.173). The creation of a skills inventory was informed by the asset-based framework which is based on the understanding that communities have assets which need to be captured and managed for the host community’s own benefit (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2008, p.22) (see skills inventory for the WPC; Appendix 15).

When applied to peacebuilding, individual skills can be thought of in terms of the ability to facilitate a dialogue or to negotiate and resolve a conflict amicably. Such kinds of abilities or skills are perceived as an entry point for a community to achieve its aspirations. While the asset-based model seeks to empower local communities through the identification of the assets at its disposal, it is not directly linked to peacebuilding as is the case with IK. The asset-based framework, is, however, focused on relationships between individuals and groups and relationships are a critical component for peacebuilding. Thus, the asset-based model does complement peacebuilding and IK in that although their points of departure differ, they converge in the promotion of relationships and the identification of assets that help communities to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. In that sense, the asset-based model

was useful in that it provided the WPC with knowledge and expertise to compile an inventory of skills, knowledge and projects that are currently being run.

John (2011, p.i51) asserts that peacebuilding largely depends on community assets such as trust, social networks and relationships which constitute the first category of individual assets. The second involves informal associations such as *Mukando*; burial societies or football clubs. These assets were captured in the data form that was designed by the PAG (see Appendix 14). A closer analysis of these assets indicates that communities in Ward 8 of Seke have vast assets which range from social networks, individuals skills, competencies in dialoguing, skills in running low-cost income generating projects, and various informal associations (see Appendix 15). Thus, if villages in Ward 8 can capitalize on individual assets and informal associations chances are they can be in a better position to take care of their own needs. Owing to the asset-based framework, the various assets at the disposal of Ward 8 were mapped and what is important now for the WPC is to manage these assets in order to increase their usage for the benefit of the community in matters to do with peacebuilding (see categories of assets in ward 8, Appendix 15).

4.5 Chapter summary

This Chapter integrated peacebuilding, IK and the asset-based frameworks with a view to put in place a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district. A peacebuilding framework was useful in that this study was able to identify Shona peaceable social norms and values in order to address the question of how can people build peace using their local resources. As mentioned above, the study has established that these peaceable values serve as a template for Shona understanding of peace and peacebuilding. Similarly, an IK framework was useful in that this study sought to establish how Shona people address conflict situations using indigenous methods such as *matare emhosva*. The study established that the process involving the resolution of conflict among the Shona aims to achieve co-existence, social harmony and reconciliation between disputants. Although Shona methods of addressing conflict are culture specific, key elements that are fundamental to peacebuilding remain visible and concrete.

In addition, the current study employed the asset-based framework and it was instrumental in the identification of strengths that are at the disposal of Shona people in Ward 8 of Seke district. Owing to this framework, the current study made an asset inventory ranging from individual skills and associations that are found in Ward 8. In a nutshell, the complementarity existing between these three frameworks was the impetus for putting in place a WPC and VPCs in order to build on what the community already know and have in the area of peacebuilding.

PART III:

**RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND
RESEARCH PLAN**

CHAPTER FIVE:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter reviews the theory and practice of PAR design and described how the cycles of PAR were applied in the Seke district before and after a WPC was established in Ward 8. The research design, data collection tools, analysis and evaluation procedures have been elucidated. Thomas Kuhn (1970) (cited by Babbie and Mouton, 2001, p.6) advises that the authority of laid down procedures should be accepted and followed carefully if progress is to be made in any research enterprise. The procedures employed in the current study were informed by the following research objectives. The first sought to establish whether and under what conditions a post-violent community can become peaceful once again. The second reviewed the means by which peace can be built. The third objective tested the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8 of Seke district by setting up a WPC in order to establish whether informal LPC can be an effective means to peacebuilding. The fourth and last objective, explored possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. In order to address these questions, the researcher worked in collaboration with an advisory team of 14 members to set up a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district informed by the PAR design.

5.2 The PAR design

PAR can be traced to the early 1990s. It is a transformed version of a family of participatory methodologies which emerged in the 1960s in Latin America. The oldest of them all is the activist participatory research which was popularized by educationists who include Paulo Freire and other proponents. Its main thrust was to empower the poor, marginalized and underprivileged people so that they could be able to identify and provide solutions to problems affecting their well-being. Subsequently, in the 1970s, Participatory Research and Rural Rapid Appraisal came in the limelight emphasizing that poor people should investigate their own situations, analyse and come up with sustainable solutions to their problems. Thus, PAR was born out of a family of methodologies that were aimed at empowering the

poor and marginalized people to take responsibility to address problems affecting them (Chambers, 1994, p.954).

The overlapping themes within this family of participatory methodologies were bottom up approaches: contextualized problem-solving, participation, empowerment, and collaborative knowledge generation to improve the quality of life of the poor and marginalized (Chambers, 1994, p.954). Turner (2009, p.233) defines the bottom-up approach "as local activities driven from grassroots, responses by indigenous communities enabled to help themselves." Karlsen (1991, p.148) defines participation as learning which is characterized by action, reflection and theorizing involving co-researchers. Participation takes place when ordinary people have the opportunity to think, discuss and make decisions independently. In such a scenario, ordinary people can learn, improvise new solutions to problems and improve their well-being (Swanepoel, 1992). Thus, the central themes underlying the family of methodologies are participation and empowerment of people experiencing problems with a view to generate knowledge which they can use to address problems affecting their well-being.

In PAR, the poor and marginalized are seen as having the capacity to help themselves out of their precarious conditions. Simply put, these methodologies seem to subscribe to the notion that the poor and marginalized can turn out to become their own messiahs if an inward-looking approach is fostered. In many respects, PAR is one of the strategies that aims to empower and enhance participation of people at the grassroots to take responsibility of their own well-being. In order to empower and strengthen the participation of rural people in Ward 8 of Seke, the current study employed PAR from the design, implementation and evaluation processes.

Whyte (cited in Karlsen, 1991, p.147) defines PAR as:

A process in which some of the people in the community being studied actively participate with the professional researcher throughout the research process from the initial design to the formal presentation of results and discussion of the action implications.

As the above proposition suggests, PAR involves the formation of a partnership between a professional researcher and some members of the community participating in a research process. This partnership is not an event but a process involving the design, implementation and evaluation of activities with a view to produce knowledge for addressing problems affecting their community. Letts *et al* (2007, p.4) contend that in PAR "the researcher works in partnership with participants through-out the research process." Thus, PAR fundamentally involves the participation of members of the community as stakeholders in a research process.

Supportively, Stiefel (2001, p.272) argues that in PAR “researchers and social actors join forces in collective research and analysis.” By implication, community members participating in a research process primarily become social actors on the pretext that they generate knowledge used for addressing the perceived social problems bedevilling their community. McKay and Marshall (2001, p.47) argues that social actors using PAR as their methodology have dual roles. In the first place they should be solving the problem under investigation and secondly they should generate new knowledge out of their experiences in the research process.

As mentioned above, PAR challenges the top/bottom route (Barbera, 2008, p.143) by taking into account IK (van Niekerk and van Niekerk, 2009, p.131). In the current study, members of the WPC never took a subordinate role the current study. They were involved in the design, implementation and evaluation and analysis of the results.

As a methodology, PAR was useful in linking research with action to bring about social change. Although, PAR is not the best design, its suitability in the current study was built on its capacity in creating or improving social practices (Whyte, 1991, p.8). Peace involves cooperation, social networks, co-existence and trust building activities resulting in positive social relationships between individuals and groups. Apart from that, peace is an action word and on that basis, PAR was suitable because it helped to bridge research and action together in order to improve or create a new practice in Ward 8 of Seke.

Furthermore, Whyte (ibid., p.9) asserts that PAR is oriented towards “a hands-on set of relationships.” A hands-on set of relationships entails that a group/community which is being studied teams up with the researcher in becoming co-researchers in order to produce knowledge that can be used to improve their social, economic, political or religious lives. Barbera (2008, p.154) points out that: “the barriers between subject and researcher are eliminated.” This barrier was bridged when I formed a coalition with a 14 member team in Ward 8.

This coalition involved individuals who shared a common concern and were prepared to work towards the resolution of the perceived problem (Gorbich, 1999, p.207). It was a group of trained participants that I entered into partnership with. The purpose of the partnership was in creating knowledge. In PAR, knowledge production is not a preserve of the researcher as is often the case in traditional research that are not participatory in nature. Thus, the production of knowledge was a shared task between the WPC members.

The creation of knowledge was made possible by the fact that PAR is premised on the assumption that if a professional researcher and local community members form a partnership in the design, implementation and analysis, some knowledge can be produced. In essence, it is the involvement of the community in the research process that gives birth to knowledge production (Stiefel, 2001, p.273). PAR created an enabling environment for the WPC in Ward 8 to create new knowledge in the area of informal LPCs. Accordingly, PAR empowered us as stakeholders in Ward 8 to collaborate in the identification of peace challenges affecting communities in Seke and the production of knowledge to address those challenges. We achieved these dual roles were achieved using the PAR cycle.

5.2.1 The PAR cycle

In the current study, the PAR cycle involved five stages: problems identification, action planning, taking action, evaluation and re-planning (see figure below).

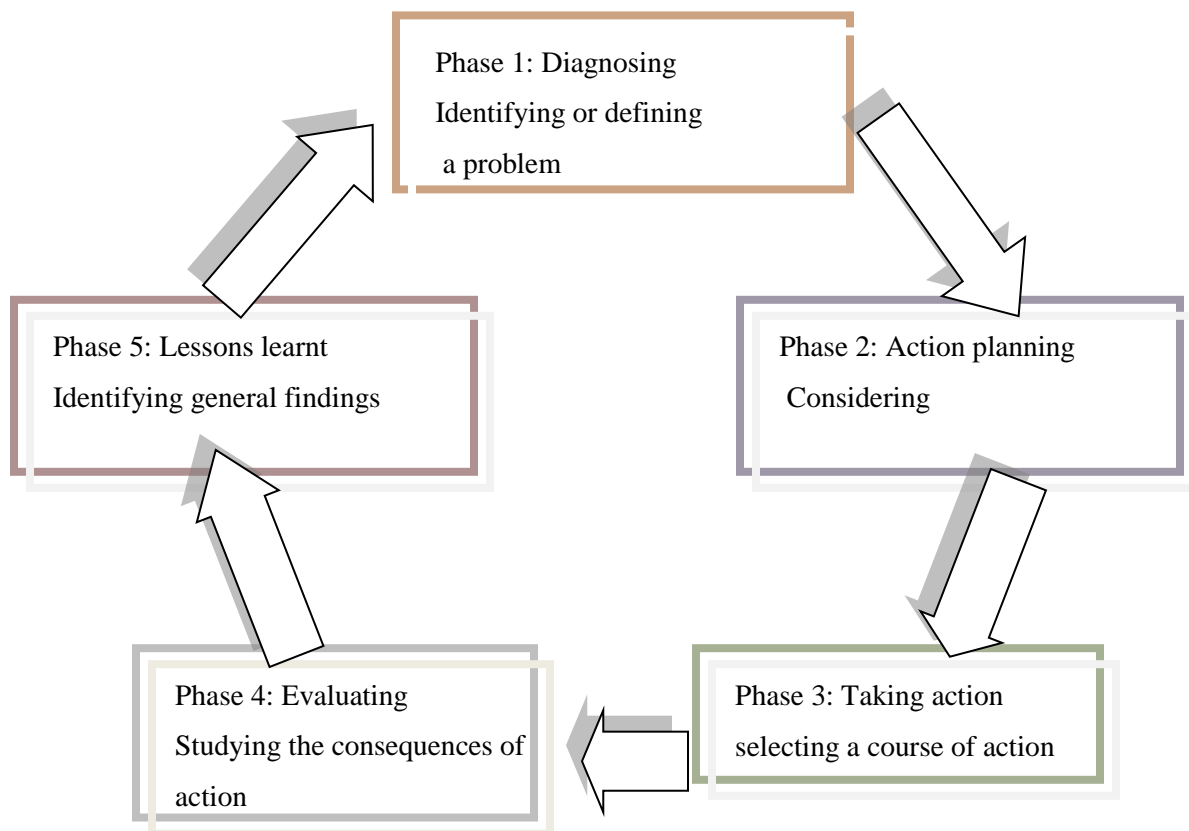


Figure 8: Participatory action research cycle

Source: Ahmed (2009:24)

These stages were characterized by meetings, discussions, setting of timeframes and defining work schedules from time to time. van Niekerk and van Niekerk (2009, p.136) point out that PAR cycle is a continuous process punctuated with cycles which moves back and forth from time to time. However, in the current study, the cycle was in two stages. The first cycle involved the setting up of a WPC which was terminated by self-evaluation by the PAG (Rhodes, Malow and Jolly, 2010, p.174). The second cycle which fed into the existing WPC gave birth to five VPCs. Details of each stage were as follows:

Phase 1-2: Problem identification and action planning

In order to be in step with the first stage of the PAR cycle, the researcher entered into the research field with an attitude open to learning from participants' experiences in Ward 8 of Seke district. From the outset, the steering committee involved two advisory team members, the ECLF district and provincial focal persons. As Karlsen (1991, p.153) advises, I was hoping "for some kind of a maturing process that eventually can make..." room for more advisory team members to come in as time progressed. In many respects, the problem identification stage kicked off on 30 September 2014, as a culmination of fact finding which started off during literature survey on informal LPCs. As mentioned above, the overall objective of the study was to set up a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district. In order to come up with criteria for would-be WPC members my role involved arranging meetings with the district and provincial focal persons until 6 November 2014. During these first stages I augmented a series of meetings, discussions and reflections with participant observations and literature survey on informal LPCs and PAR methodology. These preliminary meetings generated brainstorming sessions mainly focusing on procedures and criteria for setting up a WPC. This stage ended with a write-up on the criteria for would-be WPC members which took us to 6 November 2014.

Phase 3: Taking action

This stage involved putting resolutions from the planning meetings, discussions and reflections into action. It was characterized by goal-oriented actions, that is to say, plans were put into action and adjusted to suit existing circumstances. On Friday 6 November 2014, a call for an information meeting was made to would-be WPC members by the district focal person who was spearheading the setting up of the WPC while I assisted him. The meeting was scheduled for 7 November at 09:00 o'clock in the morning. Participants who came for the information meeting on 7 November were six (3 males and 3 females) inclusive of the district focal person and I. Following consultations with would-be WPC at a meeting convened on the day in question, a WPC was put in place through a self-selection process which involved the appointment of 15 members, including myself. I was appointed secretary of the WPC. The provincial focal person gradually dropped off as we headed towards the formation of the WPC because his primary

role was to provide professional advice on processes involved in the setting up of a WPC on 17 October 2014. Following the setting up of the peace structure members of the WPC, this automatically became my advisory team (henceforth, referred to as co-researchers/PAG) throughout the PAR cycle. In order to conform to the basic tenets of PAR, the PAG played a leading role while I took a facilitation role under the aegis of PAR. The PAG comprised of seven (7) men and eight (8) women.

Subsequently, formal and informal meetings and discussions were convened at intervals in the period between 7 November 2014 and 22 July 2015. Given that I was one of the stakeholders as the secretary of the WPC, a trusting relationship was established and sustained during the period under review. As a matter of fact, this relationship has outlived the setting up of a WPC. This was so because the position of a secretary gave me the opportunity to discuss both formally and informally with fellow WPC members about what worked and what did not work during the meetings and in other fora.

Phase 4-5: Evaluation and re-planning

The evaluation stage took place in two stages. The first involved self-evaluation by the PAG on 16 January 2015 (see Appendix 3, for self-evaluation guide questions). The second stage involved evaluation of the WPC initiative on 22 July 2015 (see Appendix 6 for preliminary evaluation guide questions). Results of the self-evaluation were analysed and reflected on 30 January 2015. Reflections on the results of the self-evaluation were made possible by the fact that from the outset, I kept a journal of activities as advised by van Niekerk and van Niekerk (2009, p.135). Thus, during our routine meetings and discussions, where necessary as a secretary I had to retrieve some information recorded both in the minute book and my own journal of activities either as a reminder or to point out some resolutions made by the group and it assisted us in the reflection process. In fact, reflections provided stakeholders with intimate knowledge regarding dynamics surrounding the activities and sustenance of a WPC.

In addition, owing to the self-evaluation, the PAG came up with a blueprint on the concept of peacebuilding in preparation for a village tour which was to be conducted in February 2015. This blueprint served as the framework during the village tour, which involved the sensitization of 29 villages in Ward 8 to consider putting in place VPCs. It was at this stage that the first cycle fed into the second PAR cycle after securing buy-in from the ward assembly on 3 February 2015.

As a result, a re-planning was made and the first cluster involving three village sensitization tours were conducted between 10, 17 and 24 February 2015. By the time of writing of this report about 16 villages had been toured and five VPCs had been put in place. Of the five VPCs established, the PAG purposively

sampled the first cluster involving three VPCs in order to establish a WPC and VPC asset inventory (see Appendix 14, for asset inventory data form). The idea of having an asset inventory emanated from the analysis of results of the self-evaluation on 30 January 2015 but was largely informed by the asset-based framework. McCall (2003, p.102) points out that the process involving the identification of capacities and assets at the disposal of the community is a positive stance which demonstrate the propensity by community to meet its own needs. Laverack and Thangphet (2009, p.172) emphasize that the identification of skills and abilities of individuals within a community is a positive move that can help to improve the lives of community members. Thus, the compilation of an asset inventory by the WPC should be applauded as an important milestone that fosters the capacity of the community to take responsibility of its own peace. The second and final stage of evaluation of the WPC in Ward 8 was made by the current research to the PAG on 22 July 2015 (see full discussion on evaluation and analysis in Chapter Nine).

5.2.2 A critique of the PAR cycle

Although in academic discourses, PAR is construed as an orthodox linear process, Kemmis and McTaggart (2007, p.277) (cited in Burns et al., 2012, p.6) note that: “the process might not be as neat as this spiral of self-contained cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting.” Simply put, PAR involves a number of dynamics which cannot be subjected to a linear process due to a number of factors such as different learning process and contextual differences. Pettit (cited in Burns *et al.*, 2012, p.6) contend that learning does not occur in a linear process because individuals and groups make sense of their experiences in different ways and varied contextual environments. Thus, the important thing to know about PAR is that some people learn through dialogue, others through participation and others still through conversation. Others learn through watching a film or any other experience. The different learning environment suggests that people experience learning differently. On the basis of this argument, PAR cannot be subjected to a particular mode of learning given the different ways of learning environment and modes. In the current study, the PAR stages were not always linear. However, the important thing was that the cycles were instrumental in the setting up of a WPC.

5.2.3 Formation of the PAG

As mentioned above, by the time of my fieldwork, in Ward 8, there were already 155 men and women inclusive of the researcher who had been trained by ECLF through the CPMRT sensitization workshops in 2013. On 5 August 2014, about 30 individuals that had attended a CPMRT sensitization workshop were purposively sampled by the district focal person for evaluation of the CPMRT sensitization workshop which was conducted in May 2013.

Working in collaboration with the district focal person, we identified trained participants that attended the evaluation on 5 August 2014 and co-opted them in the circle of would-be WPC members. By earmarking trained participants, we were building on the fact that these were people who already had some knowledge and understanding about peacebuilding but were not yet members of any peace committee. For purposes of this study, we called them social actors because they were people whom when ECLF was hoping to set up a peace committee they were going to be their target group. Thus, through CPMRT sensitization workshops, ECLF had built a reservoir of trained participants' not full members of any peace committee but not complete strangers to peace issues. In other words, ECLF had built a bank of around 155 trained participants in Ward 8 so that whenever Ward 8 was to set up a peace committee they were going to have somewhere to start and nowhere else. These were the people that the provincial, district focal persons and I targeted when we were planning to set up a WPC between 30 September 2014 and 6 November 2014.

Accordingly, since the district focal person and I were also trained by ECLF and we both belonged to the category of social actors. We also targeted people that we shared similar status with, not just community members. We considered it suitable to set up a WPC with trained participants because these individuals were within the zone of trained participants but not yet members of any peace committee. Thus, the availability of trained participants was important to the setting up of a WPC, for ECLF and lastly for my PhD studies. For that reason, these trained participants had a certain kind of status, that of a reservoir, primarily for Ward 8 community, ECLF and secondarily, for a study as this which sought to set up a pilot peace committee. The processes involving the setting up of a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district took place in stages (see Chapter Six below).

5.3 Sample

In the first chapter, it was discussed that the sample involved the PAG which comprised of 15 members inclusive of the researcher. Key informants for self-evaluation were the PAG, the WPC in Ward 8. The selection of research partners as key informants is widely practiced as confirmed by Barbera (2008, p.147). On 14 January 2015, partners for the current study were involved in the design of the self-evaluation interview guide. They served as both "key informants and research partners" (Barbera, 2008, p.147) (see composition of PAG in the Table below). The first set of the sample involved 14 PAG members comprising of equal number in terms of gender representation.

Table 3: Composition of the participatory action group

Sector	Number	Age	Sex	Village	Ethnic	Level of education
Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP)	1	46	Male	Marimbi	Zezuru	'O' Level
Education	1	44	Male	Marimbi	Karanga	Degree
Ordinary community member	1	69	Female	Vera	Zezuru	Grade 7
Traditional leadership	1	58	Female	Kuwora	Zezuru	Grade 7
Zinatha	1	70	Female	Masona	Zezuru	Form 2
Subsistence farmer	1	47	Female	Chitehwe	Kore-Kore	Form 2
Subsistence farmer	1	62	Female	Chitehwe	Zezuru	Grade 7
Health	1	45	Female	Marimbi	Manyika	'O' level
Local government	1	-	Male	Madovi	Zezuru	
Social worker	1	49	Female	Chikambi	Zezuru	Grade 7
Defence forces	1	53	Male	Murisa	Zezuru	Form 2
Minister of religion	1	56	Male	Murisa	Zezuru	Diploma
Minister of religion	1	46	Male	Vera	Manyika	Diploma
Business Forum	1	48	Male	Murisa	Kore-kore	Diploma
Total	14					

Source: Fieldwork

Additionally, three VPCs were translated into pre-existing focus groups for the current study. Five VPCs were set up by villagers following a series of village sensitization tours which took place between 10, 17 and 24 February 2015. Each VPC consisted of seven members involving men and women. However, the current study sampled members of three VPCs namely: Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi in order to have an understanding of the different types of projects that individual members were doing.

Since income generating projects was perceived as one of the critical elements of peacebuilding by the PAG, projects and skills inventory were viewed as an entry point into community peacebuilding. The three group interviews involving VPCs were all interviewed on 13 March 2015. Each group was interviewed at its convenient meeting point in their villages. It was a five-member PAG delegation that toured the VPCs to document projects and individual skills inventory process. At Chanakira village, the peace committee involved five members who included four men and one woman. At Chikambi village, the peace committee had five members involving two men and three women. Finally, at Marimbi village,

there were six peace committee members involving four women and two men. Thus, we interviewed a total of 8 men and 8 women out of the three VPCs in Ward 8 on 13 March.

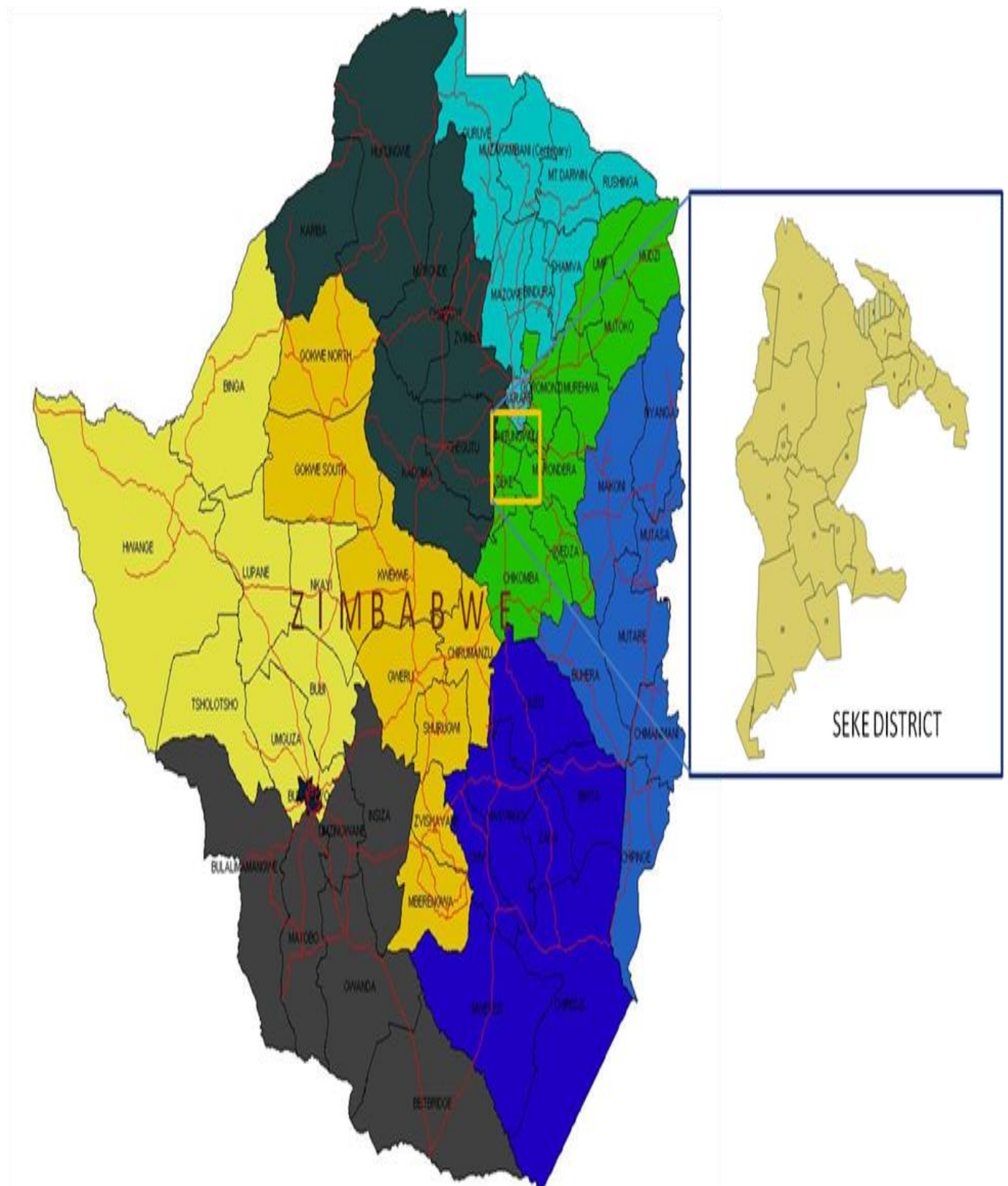
Since the purpose of this study was to set up an informal WPC, the researcher felt that it was incomplete for the study not to have a sample of individuals with experience of informal peace committees from other districts including Seke. As such I purposively selected seven individuals who narrated their stories on how peace committees were put in place. The demographic data for narrators are presented below.

Finally, I conducted six in-depth interviews involving WPC and VPC members in Ward 8 and one stakeholder belonging to a local civic organization called *Shamwari yemwanasikana*. Their gender is presented below. These informants were purposively selected by the researcher in consultation with the WPC chairperson. Data collected from these informants were presented and discussed at a monthly WPC at Chirasavana business centre, AFM in Zimbabwe church, on 4 March 2015. Morse *et al* (2002, p.16) demonstrate that by continuing to bring in more informants into the study data saturation can be achieved. Besides, through the involvement of a cross-section of informants having varied experiences the PAG was “able to gather a broad range of opinions and perspectives” (Barbera, 2008, p.148). Data collected from in-depth interviews were presented to the PAG for analysis (results of analysis by PAG are presented in Chapter Seven below).

To summarize, the sample for this study comprised of 14 PAG members, 16 members from three VPC members, six interviewees and seven narrators who shared their experiences of informal peace committees giving a total of 42 individual adults. In terms of gender characteristics, there were 21 women and 21 men who participated in the current study.

5.4 Seke district

Seke district was chosen as the research site. It is one of the nine districts in Mashonaland east province. Seke district has 21 wards divided into communal and commercial. Working with a small advisory team of 14 adults, a pilot WPC was established in Ward 8. The PAG is currently targeting communal wards which are wards 1 to 8. Of the 20 wards left, the first targeted are 8 communal wards namely ward 1: Nemasanga; ward 2: Mandedza; ward 3: Ngome; ward 4: Mutiusina zita; ward 5: Zhakata; ward 6: Chirimamhunga; ward 7: Mapfuti and Ward 8: Matiti (see figure 10 below).



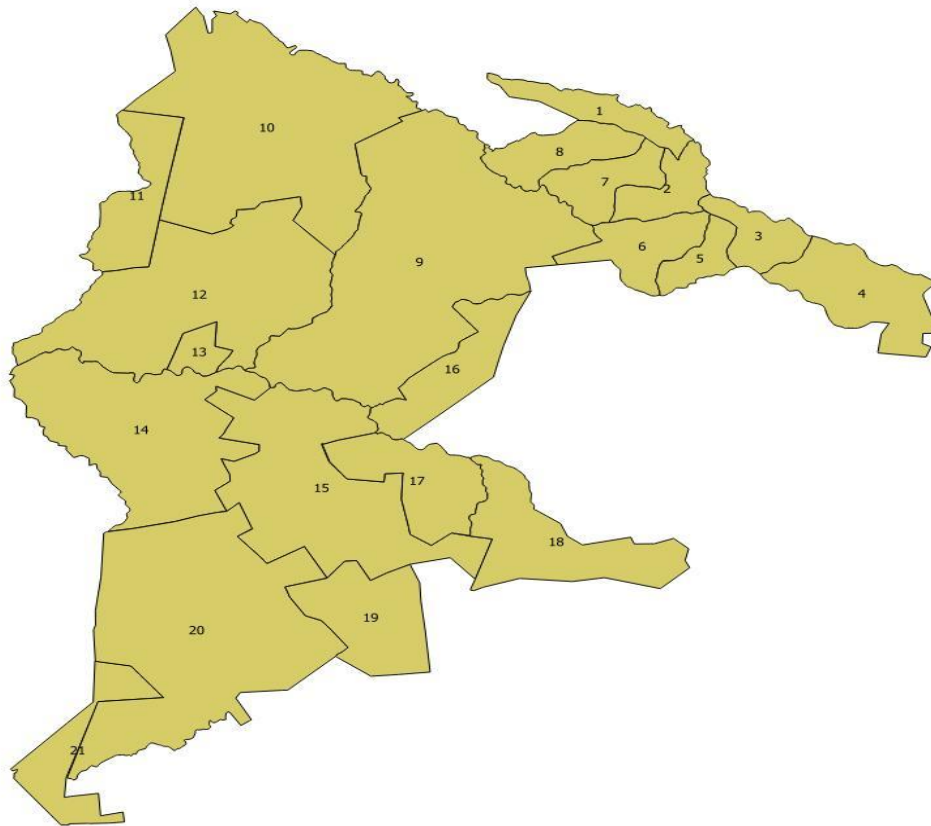


Figure 9: Seke district Map
Source: drawn by Ntozini Robert

Ward 8 of Seke district is popularly known as Matiti ward. This ward was the research site of the current study. Matiti ward was chosen because of the 21 wards only seven had received CPMRT sensitization workshops offered by ECLF and Ward 8 was one of the wards with community members that received such training.

My first-hand experience with CPMRT in Ward 8 was between 15, 16 and 17 May 2013 and the buy-in from the district focal person and from trained participants to set up a pilot peace committees. These are some of the major motivating factors that led me to select Ward 8 as my research site. The ECLF evaluation team on 5 August 2014 made it clear that putting up a peace committee was the responsibility of community members. On that basis, Ward 8 became an ideal site for the current study which sought to work with a group of people who shared similar concerns.

As such, I carefully considered forming a partnership first with the district focal person (henceforth referred to as Pastor 00010) who already has the responsibility to facilitate the setting up of a WPC in Ward 8. There were various reasons, which placed me at a strong position to form a partnership with Ward 8 trained participants. The major one is that I already had close contact with the majority of trained participants in Ward 8 ever since 2009 when I moved into Ward 8 to work as a minister of religion. Another reason was that the idea of making a partnership with ECLF trained participants in Ward 8 was a requirement for my doctor of philosophy fieldwork. Before being trained by ECLF, I had already selected Seke district as my research site in 2011. Thus, the formation of a partnership with ECLF trained participants in Seke gave me legitimacy to work with Ward 8 participants because I was not coming as an outsider but as a member of the community that I was going to work with. These merits placed me at a better position to select Seke as my research site since I was already familiar with people there and also it was cost effective given that I am resident in Seke.

5.4 Data collection methods

This section delineates methods that were employed in the current study in order to address the research objectives that underpin this study. The methods employed involved participant observation; in-depth individual interviews; focus group discussion and narratives.

5.4.1 Participant observation

Marshall (2006, p.98) defines observation as “the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and objects in the social setting chosen for the study.” From her perspective, observation is premised on the notion that behaviours which are manifested through verbal and body language and words and events are expressions of values and beliefs of a particular people being observed. In the current study, I played the role of a participant observer. As Marshall (*ibid*, p.100) points out “participant observation demands first-hand involvement in the social world chosen for the study. Immersion in the setting permits the researcher to hear, see, and to begin to experience reality as the participants do.” Overall, participant observations ran concurrently with brainstorming sessions, discussions and reflections involving the provincial and district focal persons from 30 September 2014 right up to the setting up of the WPC on 7 November 2014. I also had the opportunity to observe monthly committee meetings as from 14 November 2014 to 22 July 2015. I did not use observation checklist but preferred to produce a free-flowing notes of events as they were unfolding. While observing, I made use of a voice recorder and since I was the secretary of the WPC, I was obliged to record all what transpired because after the meeting I had the obligation to produce an updated record of minutes and for that reason, a voice recorder was useful. Apart from that I had the opportunity to observe *Mukando* schemes in the nearby villages between

7 November 2014 and 22 July 2015. These observations helped the PAG in that occasionally, while updating minutes in preparation for the next meeting, I made sense of what I observed and what transpired. Overall, given that I observed the group that I was also a member to it, this suggests that results of observations were not based on my own individual assumptions but on concrete situations.

However, Cole (1991, p.164) casts a shadow on participant observation that a participant observer can potentially influence the direction of discussions in order to achieve the outcomes that s/he hopes to achieve out of a discussion. In that regard, the assurance provided in this report is that my efforts at one point involved lobbying for an inclusive peace committee which involved both MDC and ZANU PF members because already in the committee, we had ZANU PF party members, so I was looking forward to having an MDC party member to ensure inclusivity.

In spite of these efforts to move towards the direction to have all political parties represented, the group tended to move in another direction towards the inclusion of members that seemingly were aligned to ZANU PF. For example, in one of the meetings the issue of inclusivity of other members of political parties was raised by one committee member. After a long debate I could feel that it was a sensitive issue that needed to be given some time. Simply put, the issue about the inclusion of members of opposition parties in Ward 8 became inconclusive as WPC members did not agree to take these radical steps to include MDC party members in the WPC.

At first, I personally thought the WPC was not inclusive because there were no members of the MDC. I was arguing from an academic point of view after establishing from the literature survey that informal peace committees in Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Uganda and other places were characterized by inclusivity. For me, inclusivity was vital for informal peace committees and therefore I felt strongly about it. However, I was pacified when the group reached the consensus that for now, the peace committee would be as it is until such a time when members of the peace committee had established a good reputation for themselves in the Ward, then opposition members could be co-opted to become stakeholders. At that particular moment I thought members of the peace committee “hoped for some kind of a maturing process that eventually can make new steps possible” (Cole, 1991, p.153) such as co-opting members of the political parties such as the MDC.

Out of this experience I conclude that, although I had hoped to achieve what I thought was the ideal outcome based on literature which emphasizes inclusivity as a major characteristic of any peace committee, the outcome did not turn out the way I hoped. In such a scenario, I cannot be criticized to have

produced results that I hoped to achieve out of participant observation. In fact, the outcome in the debate on inclusivity did not turn out the way I hoped, however, **I was able to go along with the dominant view** that the WPC should spell it clearly in the peacebuilding constitution that all members of political parties should be represented in the WPC. Since the constitution had not yet been written by the time of discussing issues of inclusivity, on 6 April when the constitution was first drafted and 22 July when it was finally reviewed and adopted procedurally, the issue of inclusivity was put in the Constitution (see section 3.1: *Composition of the WPC*).

As a participant observer, I did put some limits in the way in which I was getting involved but also trying not to prejudice my role and position as the secretary of the WPC. Time and again I voiced my views as to what a peace committee should look like without pushing my views too far to the detriment of other views which contradicted mine. I was cautious in my participation not to push my views at the forefront. I took these stances first in order to avoid recording activities that I would have created all by myself.

Second, I knew that by pushing my views far away from the level of my co-researchers, I was not going to gain the much-needed dynamism that often characterizes groups such as the one that was generated under the theme of inclusivity of a peace committee. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that in my participation as a secretary and researcher, there were occasions when my views were taken into consideration by my co-researchers and the outcome of the discussion may have had such characteristics in one way or the other. Overall, whatever limitations associated with participant observation, Cole (1991, p.165) put me in a stronger position when he says the limitations “were more than compensated for by the wealth of data that became available to me ...” by virtue of my position as a secretary of this peace committee. By and large when I declared from the outset that I was a researcher, it was an attempt to avoid violation of ethical standards associated with misleading my co-researchers in Ward 8 of Seke district.

5.4.2 Focus group

Another method employed in the current study was a focus group discussion. Focus group “is a technique of information gathering, based on an apparently informal discussion among a group of people” (Acocella, 2011:2). Litosseliti (2003, p.1) defines a focus group as “a relatively small structured group of people with similar characteristics who participates in a group interaction under the facilitation of a moderator.” It is clear from this definition that a focus group involves a group of people which is formed for purposes of collecting information generated during a discussion over a particular topic. Simply put, a focus group is a facilitated discussion.

On the size or number of individuals comprising a focus group, scholars differ but agree on its homogeneity nature (Morgan, 1988, p.43; Krueger, 1994, p.17; Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.26; Perecman and Curran, 2006, p.109; May, 2011, p.138). In principle, a focus group should have individuals with similar characteristics such as language, geographical location and other variables such as a seemingly social and economic status.

In the current study, the first focus group was the PAG. The PAG shared similar characteristics in that they were members of the WPC, they reside in Ward 8 and they all belong to the peacebuilding revolving loan fund scheme which was adopted on 7 November 2014. The PAG focus group comprised of nine members and was first conducted on 16 January 2015 to evaluate their own activities which ran from 7 November to 27 December 2014. On 30 January 2015, the PAG was reconvened in order to come up with a blueprint for the concept of peacebuilding which was used as a framework during village sensitization tours to 16 villages in Ward 8. The PAG was reconvened on 22 July 2015, when I conducted an evaluation in order to establish whether or not the WPC initiative was of any benefit to members of the peace committee and what they thought could be done in future in order to enhance the effectiveness of the WPC in Ward 8.

The second, third and fourth focus groups comprised of VPCs. These groups had similar characteristics in that each VPC was interviewed separately to maintain their homogeneity. The major aim was to build an asset inventory for each VPC. On that basis, we could not violate the principle of homogeneity because each VPC needed to have an understanding of individual skills and associations that are found in each village.

Regarding the total number of focus groups for each particular study, there is no agreement among scholars except that each research has to consider the merits at its disposal. Overall, one to two groups is not considered appropriate and sufficient for data collection (Krueger, 1994, p.6; Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.28; McGivern, 2006, p.188). For Morgan (1988, p.42) one focus group is not enough, two are acceptable but they are not safe. So he goes on to suggest three to four different groups but he advises that the number of focus groups is often determined by the various segments of the population under study. This study has considered Krueger's (1994, p.6) advice that three different groups are appropriate for data collection that can relatively be enough to sustain a study.

In light of this, the current study made use of four focus groups in different stages and purpose. The first involved self-evaluation by the PAG. The other three involved three VPCs. These types of focus groups are popularly known as pre-existing focus groups (Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.23). Pre-existing focus groups were adopted in the current study in order to utilize the following merits.

- It is part of an established network;
- It is inexpensive in terms of recruitment;
- There is a sense of obligation to attend the group discussion and therefore not labour intensive;
- It has the capacity to bring about a shared experience;
- Pre-existing focus groups can challenge discrepancies existing between contradicting beliefs and behaviour that is anti-social according to their group norms;
- Participants in pre-existing focus groups can remind each other about long forgotten, recent past events or circumstances. These dynamics are not likely to take place in focus groups comprising of strangers (Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.22-3).

On the basis of these merits, I considered it a privilege to conduct focus groups involving the PAG, and three VPCs since they were involved in addressing peace challenges affecting their communities as well as in producing knowledge to improve the creation of peace committees in their ward. The self-evaluation comprised of nine participants involving five women and four men. The demographic characteristics for PAGs are presented in the Table below. Subsequently, after the self-evaluation by the PAG, the second, third and fourth focus group involved VPCs.

Table 4: Demographic characteristics for PAG

Number	Composition	Age Group	Sex	Language
1(n=1)	Village head	Late 50s	Female	Zezuru
2(n=1)	Defence forces	Early 50s	Male	Zezuru
3(n=1)	Community health worker	Mid 40s	Female	Ndau
4(n=2)	Subsistence farmer	Early 60s	Female	Zezuru
	Subsistence farmer	Late 40s	Female	Kore-kore
5(n=2)	Minister of religion	Mid 40s	Male	Manyika
	Minister of religion	Mid 50s	Male	Zezuru
6(n=1)	Traditional healer	Early 70s	Female	Zezuru
7(n=1)	Business forum	Late 40s	Male	Manyika
N=9				

Source: Fieldwork

Regarding the time frame for each focus group session, scholars differ. Bloor *et al* (2001, p.53) highlighted that time frame should be two hours if participants are provided with motivations in cash and kind. May (2011, p.138) suggested one and half to two and half hours. However, May (2011) is silent on whether motivation should be factored in or not. In any case, members of the PAG were not rigid with time allocation per participant because the number of participants appeared small to take us longer than two and half hours.

At Marimbi village, we interviewed six peace committee members and we spend about one hour and 30 minutes with them. Each member participated equally because the four questions were focusing on skills that each individual believes he/she has and the types of projects currently being run whether by the individual peace committee member or as a group. The second question focused on projects run by the village or has run before. A follow-up question probed for clubs/associations that individual members of the peace committee belonged to. The third question probed for a way forward from all the members of the VPC (see Table below for Marimbi VPC).

Table 5: Demographic characteristics for Marimbi VPC focus group

Number	Composition	Age group	Sex	Level of Edu.	Language
1(n=4)	Entrepreneur	73	Female	Standard 6	Zezuru
	Entrepreneur	68	Male	Standard 6	Zezuru
	Entrepreneur	53	Female	Junior certificate	Zezuru
	Entrepreneur	38	Female	Ordinary level	Zezuru
1(n=1)	Neighbourhood watch	61	Male	Standard 6	Zezuru
1(n=1)	Community worker	40	Female	Ordinary level	Ndau
N=6					

Source: Fieldwork

Their responses were captured by the secretary. All members of the PAG participated in asking and clarifying questions for the VPC focus group members to understand. As such, time allocation was determined by the quick response by participants at each village.

In Chanakira village, we asked the same questions and five participants attended the focus group. We spent one hour 19 minutes.

Table 6: Demographic characteristics for Chanakira VPC focus group

Number	Composition	Age group	Sex	Level of Edu.	Language
1(n=1)	Subsistent farmer	58	Male	Junior certificate	Karanga
2(n=1)	Development officer	40	Female	Diploma	Tonga
3(n=1)	Driver	38	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
4(n=1)	Traditional leader	36	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
5(n=1)	Entrepreneur	28	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
N=5					

Source: Fieldwork

In Chikambi village, of the five participants that turned up we spent one hour 23 minutes with them after asking similar questions (see Table below for Chikambi VPC demographic data).

Table 7: Demographic characteristics for Chikambi VPC focus group

Number	Composition	Age	Sex	Level of edu.	Language
1(n=4)	Subsistent farmer	59	Female	Standard 5	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	55	Male	Junior certificate	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	53	Female	Grade 7	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	26	Male	Ordinary level	Zezuru
2(n=1)	Community worker	49	Female	Grade 7	Zezuru
N=5					

Source: Field work

Overall, each of the three focus groups spent more than an hour as statistics indicates. After conducting a discussion we gave participants data forms (see Appendix 14) with similar questions to provide information for archival records by the WPC.

Vicsek (2007) and McIntyre (2008) observed that in focus group discussions, chances are that some participants may be reluctant to share opinions on a particular topic based on their own personal reasons. However, since the aim of these focus groups was to build an asset and skills inventory for each VPC some questions were directed at individuals skills and associations that they belonged to and so each member of the peace committee felt obliged to open up for discussion. Thus, the potentialities for reluctance by some focus group participants to share opinions was curbed by the nature of questions which seemed to compel each individual peace committee member to share his/her opinion on the skills that he/she possess and projects currently running in their village. The utility of focus group discussions

was blended with individual in-depth interviews (Morgan, 1988, p.15; Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.12; Burns and Grove, 2011, p.87).

5.4.3 In-depth interview

In addition to focus groups, the PAG mandated the secretary of the peace committee to conduct individual interviews from a cross-section of Ward 8 stakeholders. There is extensive literature on in-depth individual interview that it is predominantly qualitative and is often unstructured (Miller and Glassner, 2011, p.137; May, 2011, p.13). Before the interview sessions were taken on-board, the PAG had to agree on thematic areas out of which interview guide questions were developed. These involved: a review of processes involving the setting up of WPCs/VPCs; how stakeholders in Ward 8 understood the concept of peacebuilding? The extent to which stakeholders programmes were contributing to peacebuilding in their various and diverse segments? As such the PAG mandated the secretary to conduct these interviews to stakeholders in the ward including members of the WPC. The demographic data for interviewees is shown on the Table below.

Table 8: Demographic characteristics for Ward 8 stakeholders

Number	Sex	Composition	Age	Level of Edu.	Village	Ethnicity
1(n=1)	F	Ordinary member	59 years	Grade 7	Chikambi	Zezuru
2(n=1)	F	Community worker	48 years	Grade 7	Chikambi	Zezuru
3(n=1)	M	Minister of religion	46 years	Degree	Murisa	Kore-kore
4(n=1)	F	Ward Coordinator	46 years	Diploma	Matambo	Zezuru
5(n=1)	F	Farmer	62 years	Grade 7	Chitehwe	Zezuru
6(n=1)	F	Shamwari yeMwana	Late 20s	Degree	Unit G	Zezuru
N=6						

Source: Fieldwork

During interview sessions I was careful in the questioning style. I adopted the open-ended and non-directive questioning style as advised by McGivern (2006, p.195). He suggested that one way of posing an interview question is to use prompting techniques which involves among other things repeating, rephrasing or using non-verbal cues such as nodding to encourage the informant to speak. Also, Newwell and Bernard (2006, p.63) proposed that a good way is to use probing as a technique for more details, concluding that the ideal way of doing it is to repeat the last few words of the informant's responses without breaking a chain of thought. They highlighted that the advantage of doing so is to be able to check the extent to which the researcher has grasped what the informant communicated. Further they suggested the use of minimum prompts such as ('mmm') and ('ok') and the maintenance of reasonable

eye contact was realized during the interview sessions (ibid., 63). These techniques were instrumental in the collection of data.

Given that the goal of in-depth interview was to gain insight and understanding of how VPC were created, and how stakeholders in the Ward contributes to peacebuilding, a total of six informants were considered appropriate. The findings from these interview sessions were presented by the secretary to the PAG at a meeting on 4 March 2015. Since this study was focused on informal peace committees, it was imperative to hear what other stakeholders with experiences on peace committees outside Seke have to say. For that reason, the researcher had the opportunity to converse with individuals from Chitungwiza, Wedza, Marondera, Harare and Mutare districts. Their experiences were reported in narrative form.

5.4.4 Narrative

Narrative is a data collection tool that is premised on the idea that individuals have the capacity to “construct their realities through narrating their stories” (Marshall, 2006 p.117). This method heavily relies on individual’s accounts of the personal experiences on a particular event, organization or phenomenon.

After gaining an understanding of peace committees using scholastic lens, I endeavoured to solicit the experiences of individuals involved in peacebuilding initiatives, in this regard, for two reasons. First, I was eager to know the experiences of other people involved in setting up informal peace committees in Zimbabwe, in particular those communities which happened to shelter Shona people. Second, it became clear to me that the phrase ‘peace committees’ has received a fair share and was fairly well understood at the grassroots level, but little attention in the area of empirical research in Zimbabwe has been made. Nonetheless, individual narratives on experiences of peace committees in particular, participants whose stories have been captured in this document, seem not to have gained scholarly attention up to this point. **This study therefore suggests that to enhance the effectiveness of informal peace committees, future studies should incorporate individual narratives on experiences of peace committees in order to add the experiential component to existing literature on peacebuilding initiatives.**

In order to solicit life experiences of some peacebuilding actors, I engaged in conversations which triggered the development of this study. In order to complement group interviews and individual interviews I purposively conducted informal conversations and out of these conversations two narrators agreed to develop write-ups about their experiences of informal peace committees. This scenario proved to me that informal conversations can potentially yield new insights or open windows for new

information to come forth. As a qualitative adherent, I was involved in talking; listening; watching; reproducing facts and ideas.

After a self-evaluation by the PAG on 16 January 2015, I personally made a conscious decision to have an additional number amounting to seven narrators who had not been actively involved in setting up WPC in Ward 8. In order to be selected as a narrator the informant had to have first-hand experience of informal peace committees at community level. Morse *et al.* (2002, p.15-16) pointed out that data sets in pilot studies are often thin and therefore an additional number of informants was ideal. In that regard, I decided to have an additional number of informants “for purposes of increasing the scope, adequacy and appropriateness of the data” (Morse *et al.*, 2002, p.16). In that regard, I asked some stakeholders who had participated in setting up peace committees to narrate their experiences of peace committees in their places of operations. Demographic characteristics for narrative participants were represented in the table below.

Table 9: Demographic characteristics for narrators

Number	Occupation	Sex	Age	Level of Education	District
1(Narr.0001)	Founding director	Male	Early 40s	Master of Peace	Mutare
2(Narr.0002)	Founding director	Male	early 50s	Master of Education	Harare
3(Narr.0003)	Ward councillor	Female	Early 40s	O level	Wedza
4(Narr.0004)	Community worker	Male	Late 40s	O level	Wedza
5(Narr.0005)	Community worker	Male	Late 30s	O level	Marondera
6(Narr.006)	Youth worker	Male	Late 20s	O Level	Seke
7(Narr.007)	Minister of religion	Male	Early 30s	Degree	Chitungwiza
N=7					

Source: Fieldwork

As shown in the Table above, narrators were seven adults from six different districts: Harare district; Marondera district; Wedza, Mutare, Chitungwiza and Seke in Ward 8. There were four men and one woman narrator (the stories of each narrator are presented in Chapter Six). Due to space restrictions in the main report, stories by Narr.0001 and 0002 were inserted in Appendix 7.

5.5 Designing evaluation, interview and focus group guides

Since this study was predominantly based on participation, I facilitated the process but was led by the PAG. For example, the design of the self-evaluation guide involved input from the PAG in that they came

up with thematic areas but tasked the secretary to come up with questions. The interview guide that I used for collecting data from six stakeholders was derived from the self-evaluation results in consultation with the chairperson of the WPC. After the self-evaluation, the PAG conducted a village sensitization tour after which five VPCs were established. The PAG designed a focus group guide to map the various projects and skills that individual members in VPC were embarking on. I personally designed the narrative guide.

5.5.1 Issues of language

As a native Shona I was faced with a dilemma that some people think in their own language which is Shona. Since this study was written in English Language it means a gap was likely to occur. The gap was that originality was potentially going to get lost in the translation process. In order to minimize these possible discrepancies, I engaged a translator who assisted in translating from Shona to English Language in order to draw closer to the original intent of informants whose data was collected using Shona language. The translator, Mr. S. Maruta, is a secondary school English Language teacher. He holds a Masters in English Language from Iowa State University, United States of America. On the basis of his credentials and English language proficiency, I was convinced that gaps often associated with translation from one language to another were to be minimized. Mr. Maruta translated the two principal documents written by the WPC: *Mukando* and Peacebuilding constitutions (see Appendix 11 and 13, respectively). The meanings conveyed by the writers of these two constitutions were upheld and reflected.

5.6 Data collection procedures

As mentioned above, data was collected from individual in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observations and narratives and a digital voice recorder was instrumental in the process. In addition, during weekly and monthly WPC meetings, I had the obligation to capture all the deliberations to complement written notes, as I was tasked with producing write-ups out of every formal or informal meeting. In many respects, all meetings conducted between 7 November 2014 and 22 July 2015 during which period I have served as a secretary of the WPC, were to be recorded primarily for the WPC and secondarily for my PhD research. The WPC and other stakeholders used Shona language.

Data transcription was on-going throughout the data collection process. With the help of an audio voice recorder, transcription of data was made possible immediately after collection. As mentioned, after every meeting I had to transcribe all the information collected during a WPC meeting in preparation for the next meeting. Thus, listening to a voice recorder for purposes of transcribing data almost became like a norm for the nine months that I served as secretary of the WPC. Subsequent transcription of data after a

meeting, interviews and focus groups was helpful in that I was able to make sense of the tone of voice, inflection, and pauses by informants and WPC participants (Burns and Grove, 2011, p.93). Minutes of the WPC did not need to be translated from Shona to English Language but only the data which I considered relevant for this study were translated into English language.

5.6.1 Data analysis procedures

The data analysis process was on-going and it involved the conversion of notes into write-ups in order to replace missing links, to edit, classification and tabulation of collected data to make it more amenable to theme identification and coding. Data was coded by placing labels or tags on raw data. I did this by way of classifying patterns of relationship along the lines of perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and factual data (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). In the current study, I employed a data coding system called pattern coding in which I assigned names to specific data along the lines of recurring themes (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995).

The identification of themes for discussion was made possible when I devised a coding system technique. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) advises that codes should be represented by letters or symbols. In the current study, I preferred to use letters. In that regard, themes such as peace was coded as PC; peacebuilding was coded as PB; living together was coded as LT, and self-selection process was coded as SSP among other codes (for details on data analysis codes see Appendix 10). For ease of identification and distinction of themes from major to sub-themes, those that were repeated or kept on recurring more frequently I considered them as major themes and the rest I considered them as sub-themes.

Overall, the initial analysis of data involved discussions by the PAG after which I was able to identify themes. The PAG was involved in the analysis of data just as Bloor *et al* (2001, p.13) emphasized that informants who participate in the design and implementation are justified to analyse data. Krueger (1994, p.153) contends that “these individuals [the PAG] have had first-hand exposure to each of the discussions, observed the interactions ... and likely have had the most intensive exposure to the problem.” That way the PAG was justified to analyse data. Letts *et al* (2007, p.4) argue that in PAR, individuals and groups have the opportunity to “reflect on their values, shared realities, collective human meanings, needs and goals.” This means that the ability by the PAG to come up with a blueprint on the concept of peacebuilding owing to reflections on the data was normal (See conclusions on the concept of peacebuilding in Chapter Ten). Since this study required me to prepare a formal academic report, I took a step further to compare results of the analysis by the PAG with the reviewed literature for possible links or divergences. This analysis was a launch-pad for the current study to confirm or dispel whether and

under what conditions informal peace committees can be an effective response to peace challenges affecting local communities?

5.7 Research plan

Since the study could not begin without a blueprint, the PAR design was taken on board to serve as a framework. Since the study was predominantly participatory, a series of meetings were convened in view of the following plan:

- 1) to consult with the provincial and district focal persons on criteria for setting up a WPC and to develop a blueprint for setting up a WPC;
- 2) to advise Ward 8 councillor on plans to set up a WPC;
- 3) to select would-be WPC members;
- 4) to come up with a date for the information meeting with would-be WPC members;
- 5) to implement a plan of action involving the setting up of a WPC
- 6) to conduct a preliminary self-evaluation of the activities of the WPC by the end of 2014;
- 7) to come up with a blue print on the concept of peacebuilding which will serve as a framework for peacebuilding programmes in Ward 8 of Seke district;
- 8) to make a trial run to set up VPCs in Ward 8;
- 9) to conduct the asset inventory for the WPC and VPCs;
- 10) to come up with a plan of action to sustain peacebuilding programmes in every village with established peace committees;

Of the 10-point plan involving the setting up and sustenance of the WPC and VPCs in Ward 8, it was point number 6 that was not achieved on time. Initially, I endeavoured to have a self-evaluation of the WPC by the end of 2014, but overriding events did not allow the self-evaluation to take place until 16 January 2015 and the subsequent analysis of the evaluation results on 30 January the same year. Another point to note is the second stage involving preliminary evaluation of the WPC (details of preliminary evaluation are in Chapter Nine). Initially, I had planned to terminate this PAR with the self-evaluation by the end of 2014. One of the distinct characteristics worth mentioning was the writing of the *Mukando* Constitution on 27 December 2014, which was not originally in my research plan. This constitution attracted my attention and enthusiasm to continue to work with the PAG until a peacebuilding constitution was written of which the first draft was completed on 6 April and the final draft with subsequent adoption on 22 July 2015. The writing of these two documents was to ensure efficiency of the WPC. *Mukando* scheme rarely operate without a constitution and the same is true of informal peace committees. It was these developments that prompted me to conduct evaluation in two stages (16 January and 22 July 2015 respectively) which were not in the initial research plan.

5.8 Fieldwork experiences

In this section I have chronicled preparations into and the actual fieldwork experiences in Ward 8 of Seke district. Maphosa (2013, p.93) emphasizes that: “quality fieldwork depends on careful planning and implementation.” In the current study, my first port of call was the identification of would-be partners. As mentioned already the district and provincial focal persons were my first partners. We conducted a number of meetings and in these meetings and discussions a platform was created to express our goals for a community peace initiative and to foster participation. The district focal person accepted my proposal to work together in the setting up of a WPC in Ward 8. As mentioned already, Seke district has 21 wards and out of these wards, Ward 8 was my study area.

5.8.1 Going into the field

As a PAR enthusiast, I went into the field without a ready-made data collection tools as is the case with those research approaches that are not participatory in nature. From the outset, I had it in mind about what needed to be done regarding whom to talk to first. As my first priority, I engaged the ECLF district focal person. Thus, in Ward 8, I purposively identified the district focal person knowing well-ahead of time that he was going to assist me in the identification of the would-be WPC members from amongst a pool of ECLF trained participants in Ward 8.

On the second day of the meeting on 10 October 2014, to get the district focal person on board, I cultivated a trusting relationship with him as a starting point. Once a trusting relationship was established, I explained to him that the nature of the research we were planning to embark on was predominantly participatory and that it was aimed at establishing a WPC using a participatory approach. The entry point of engaging the district focal person was a discussion on a number of topics related to procedures involved in the setting up of a WPC. Some of the talking points discussed were captured below:

Researcher: *As the ECLF district focal person, do you have any standing committee that you are working with in Seke district?*

District focal person: *There is no standing committee, I am all by myself.*

Researcher: *When were you appointed to become the district focal person?*

District focal person: *That was in 2012*

Researcher: *What are some of your duties?*

District focal person: *My duties include mobilizing local communities for the CPMRT training workshops. I liaise with ward councillors to invite village heads and other stakeholders such as the police, ministry of youth among other sectors.*

Researcher: *Which are some of the wards that you have mobilized so far for the CPMRT?*

District focal person: *I mobilized Madamombe ward; Zhakata ward; Mapfuti ward, Dema and Matiti ward.*

Researcher: *Here I am! Coming in as a researcher in Ward 8, how do you perceive me, Am I not an intruder in your own view?*

District focal person: *You are not an intruder at all because you are resident in Ward 8. You were trained by ECLF and we need people that have been trained by ECLF because they make our work much easier than untrained people. Being part of Ward 8 peace committee is one of your key result areas and there is also an advantage that you are a researcher. You will be doing work on the ground.*

Researcher: *So my history with ECLF creates legitimacy so that I don't become an intruder is that what you are saying? In fact from a researcher's point of view I should not be an intruder. For your own information when I went to Marondera I had not thought of it that one day such a track record was going to be of help to me. Off course, by then in 2011, I had already selected Seke as my study locale but it is only now that I am realizing the importance of events and how they can help to unlock certain opportunities in future like now.*

District focal person: *You cannot be an intruder because you have been engaged with ECLF.*

Researcher: *In 2013, I had the opportunity to attend CPMRT in Ward 8 which is the place that we now look forward to setting up a pilot peace committee plus the evaluation meeting which was carried out on 5 August 2014.*

Researcher: *So in participatory research, we are not there to manipulate each other. We work as a team. The objective is to develop the community. Community is our agenda. This explains why on 17 October 2014, I explained to the provincial focal person that I am involved in community work to set up a pilot peace committee.*

District focal person: *It's easy to work with the community where you belong because you are part of everyday life of that community. If you are a member of that community you can go wherever you so wish.*

Researcher: *The reason why I had to ask the question whether I am an intruder or not was to locate my position in Ward 8 community. I was happy that you were appointed as the district focal person meaning that you are now the gatekeeper into ward 8 community. With community I refer to ECLF trained participants because that is our entry point into Ward 8.*

Researcher: *what do you expect to benefit out of our interactions as co-researchers?*

District focal person: *Out of you, we need your facilitation skills in peacebuilding training programmes in the ward or district level. It means we may not need to invite ECLF facilitators because they may not have money at the very moment that we need them to come to us. We need you to be our link person to other facilitators that you personally know can benefit us in this ward and district.*

Researcher: *The point I may need to emphasize is that in participatory research I am not an expert. It is a group work activity meaning that we exchange knowledge. We will do it together that means every time when I say something I come across in literature I will also be making my contributions while you also contribute uniquely with your experience and expertise. I think this will lead us to the right path in order to put in place a ward pilot peace committee.*

District focal person: *Ya sure*

In the foregoing discussion, it was important that I identified the district focal person first because he held the responsibility to engage the community in setting up a WPC. My second priority was to get the district focal person to understand PAR and what is involved with it. I took time to explain to the district focal person our roles in the participatory process so that we could collaborate having the same perspective and direction. To mitigate the expert-subject syndrome, I offered examples of participatory approach from literature and drafts to the district focal person as advised by Barbara (2008, p.147). As such, I carefully selected writings on participatory approaches with illustrations to ensure that the district focal person understood what is involved in the process. The important factor worth mentioning is the district focal person is able to read and write including English language. He sat for the Ordinary Level examination and therefore did not experience any challenge to read extracts written in English that I gave him in order to understand and familiarize him with PAR.

I occasionally explained to the district focal person that in PAR he was not my research assistant as is the case in other research approaches (Maphosa, 2013, p.93) but a research partner. I emphasized the point that in PAR, partners plan, design, implement and evaluate the research process together. Further, I explained that partners in research engage in planning, review and learning. I showed him pictures some of which include the above PAR cycle to illustrate what is involved in PAR. Thus we tried our level best to follow the cycles though not in a linear process. Thus, events relating to the WPC that took place between 30 September 2014 and 22 July 2015 were relatively closer to conforming to the PAR cycle.

Overall, to ensure that a participatory approach was not violated or undermined the entry point was a discussion with the district focal person in order to spell out the objectives of the WPC we were planning to set up. The discussion went as follows:

Researcher: *The WPC that we are planning to create should have objectives. In your own view which are some of the objectives of the WPC that we are planning to create?*

District focal person: *To empower the community and promote peace.*

Researcher: *What type of empowerment are you talking about?*

District focal person: *Empowerment when I am looking at it in most cases, it involves technical know-how through training. In other words people need to be imparted with information so that they can in turn impart knowledge to their peers. After that financial empowerment is also important because people need to have resources.*

Researcher: *Is there anything more you can say regarding objectives?*

District focal person: *I think let's start working with these two objectives for now. Other objectives will come along as we go.*

The above discussion showed that setting up a WPC was the major objective. It made some sense for us to start with objectives first before taking any further step into the creation of the WPC. Thus, the entry point into Ward 8 WPC involved discussions to come up objectives of the initiative. The second and last objective focused on the empowerment of members of the peace committee structure once it was put in place.

After establishing objectives of the WPC, I spelled out the reason why I decided to partner with the district focal person (henceforth referred to as Pastor 00010) in the process to set up a WPC. Further, I explained to him that once the WPC was put in place I was expected to produce a report on the activities involving the setting up of WPC. I explained to him that I was hoping to have a team of researchers to work with from the design to the evaluation of the WPC. Further, I explained to him that the purpose of this partnership was for the team members to have a hands-on experience on processes involving the creation of informal peace committees. Also, I highlighted that the self-evaluation was going to help us as a team to draw some lessons and to produce new knowledge on informal peace committees based on our experiences gained out of the creation of a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district. In this entire matrix, I made it clear that my responsibility was to play the role of a facilitator and the anticipated team of researchers were going to play the role of active participants. After these explanations we then took turns to explain each other's responsibilities to avoid incompatible interests and duplication of duties along the way. (Details of activities that took place between 30 September 2014 and 6 November 2014 prior to the setting up of a WPC are described in Chapter Six.)

5.9 Ethical considerations

From the outset, I obtained the necessary permission from both the ECLF provincial focal person and Pastor 00010 who were responsible for working with communities in putting place peace committees in Seke district. The provincial focal person was the overall responsible person for Mashonaland east province while the district focal person was responsible for a particular district such as Seke. I committed myself to providing details about the purpose of the research that it was aimed at improving or creating a new practice in processes involved for setting up informal LPCs. As such, they agreed to partner with me on the basis that since my study was aimed at setting up a WPC with an eye view to understand how these structures contributes to peacebuilding, I promised them that the study was not in any way going to violate their space as well as the space of ECLF. Since this WPC belonged to the community in Ward 8, my research needed the knowledge system of Ward 8 community. This value addition was made because I have walked together with 14 members of the WPC who are also members of Ward 8 from the design, implementation and evaluation of VPCs.

As is often the case in other research, I was supposed to have written a letter to ECLF to seek permission to set up a WPC in Ward 8 Seke with participants that they trained. However, this letter was not written because of the following two major reasons. In the first place, ECLF gives the responsibility of setting up peace communities to trained participants and therefore, since I was one of ECLF trained participants and a member of the community that I was researching, I asked for permission from the district and provincial focal persons. Another reason was that the provincial and district focal persons who were responsible for setting up a WPC accepted to partner with me and they pointed out that there was no need for a letter since I was a member of the community I was researching. This means that I did not impose myself into an existing plan. In fact, the provincial and district focal person and I established a partnership on the basis of mutual understanding and respect of each other as stakeholders in the ward and this partnership was established on the basis that we were pursuing similar interests that is the establishment of a WPC. Thus, the setting up of a WPC and the subsequent VPCs were a responsibility of ECLF trained participants in Ward 8 of Seke.

As mentioned above, the co-research partnership was first formed between the district focal person, then with the provincial focal person and finally with the WPC members and VPCs. During the period prior to the establishment of a WPC which stretched from 30 September to 6 November 2014, I explained in more detail to the district focal person as my co-researcher that were expected to evaluate our own activities after which we drew some lessons.

In the second place, the district focal person after co-opting every one of us into different positions in the WPC on 7 November 2014, explained to all of us [peace committee members] that we automatically became co-researchers in this pilot peace committee. Further, he explained that since the Ward 8 peace committee was to be a model for other would-be peace committees in the district, he encouraged all peace committee members to co-operate so that at the end of the year in December 2014 and the subsequent years members could be able to evaluate their activities. On that note, I assured the team members that the information in my report was to be used in a way that protected the dignity, privacy and reputation of all members of the peace committee. I promised them that after writing my PhD report, it will be availed to the provincial and district focal persons for future references. Other issues discussed and agreed upon were to do with photographs. Since my co-researchers were keen to have group photographs placed in my final report, we agreed that although photographs were to be used, names of members of the WPC were going to be withheld except in the *Mukando* and peacebuilding constitutions were all members requested their names to be retained. Although some team members did not feel threatened to have their names

disclosed in the report, those who decided to have their names withheld I was careful to observe this ethical requirement in my report. Thus, where names were required for data analysis processes, I came to an agreement with team member to use pseudo-names (such as Pastor 00010, Mr. 00011, Chaplain 00012, or Mrs. 00013) in order to protect participants' dignity, reputation and confidentiality.

5.10 Evaluation of the WPC initiative

As mentioned above, evaluation was in two stages. The first involved self-evaluation of activities that took place between 7 November 2014 and 16 January 2015. van Niekerk and van Niekerk (2009, p.138) view self-evaluation as a process in which "individuals assess their own behaviours by simply recalling, examining and reflecting on their own actions with the help of other members or individuals." This evaluation was facilitated by the chairperson of the peace committee, Pastor 00010 and the secretary, this researcher recorded the proceedings manually and complimented this with a voice recorder to capture all what transferred after which I produced a write-up with all the deliberations for analysis. This self-evaluation took place on 16 January 2015 and results were discussion on 30 January 2015. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse the course of actions and approaches that were used for setting up a WPC in Ward 8 and to draw some lessons for the future. Self-evaluation gave a sense of ownership (see self-evaluation guide questions, Appendix 3).

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The second and final stage of evaluation during the course of my PhD fieldwork was conducted on 22 July 2015, following a review of the WPC peacebuilding constitution. At first, I conducted in-depth interview with the chairperson, deputy and two committee members and then later on conducted a group interview with the PAG to find out their views on whether the peace committee initiative was worth the effort, to find out proven benefits out of the WPC, lessons that the WPC have learnt and what they think should be done in future if more informal peace committees are to be put in place in Seke district and perhaps across Zimbabwe (see Appendix 6 for evaluation guide questions). The PAG that attended this evaluation session comprised of 13 members inclusive of the researcher (see figure 10 below). A detailed discussion of results of the evaluation of the WPC is in Chapter Nine below.

5.11 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed the theory and practice of PAR design and described how the cycles of PAR were to be applied in Seke district before and after a WPC was established in Ward 8. Steps that were taken during the course of the research process were reviewed and put in their corresponding stages of the PAR cycle. Data collection methods included interviews, narratives, focus groups of existing groups such as the PAG, and VPCs. Participant observation was employed to complement data collected through other

data collection tools. Given the participatory nature of the study, some data were collection through both formal and informal meetings in which the secretary had to write minutes of the WPC meetings and some themes were drawn out of these meeting.



Figure 10: The PAG after evaluation on 22 July 2015.

CHAPTER SIX

PROCEDURES USED FOR SETTING UP A WPC AND VPCs

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the steps taken by a small advisory team of 14 members that I have worked with from September 2014 to July 2015. These steps resulted in the setting up of a WPC and five VPCs and the subsequent evaluations in two stages. To create the groundwork for testing the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8, the preceding Chapter reviewed the steps involved in putting an informal peace committee in place using PAR cycles. This chapter described the PAR cycles. However, the PAR cycle was not linear but back and forth as the process involved stakeholders who also had other commitments. Drawing from the hands-on experience of setting up a WPC, this study concludes that setting up an informal peace committee is not a far-fetched task: intervention can serve as a vehicle for collaboration. A number of lessons were drawn from setting up a WPC. The major one was that of the utility of the self-selection model in setting up informal committees at community level. This study found out that the self-selection model is compatible with PAR in that it fosters participation and inward-looking perspectives to the community and embraces community ownership of the process. The self-selection process therefore increases possibilities of sustainability of the peace initiative.

6.2 Entry into Ward 8 of Seke district: Preliminary stages

The section describes the process of setting up a WPC, starting with the initial stages. Some of the discussions and points below are noted in the previous Chapter as part of the research design.

Tuesday 30 September 2014: I had it in mind about what needed to be done regarding processes for setting up of a peace committee and that I had the obligation to identify co-researchers since this study was predominantly participatory. I decided to involve ECLF trained participants in my research because they had been trained in peacebuilding and therefore they had the status of social actors. In my own understanding, these trained participants qualified to be called social actors because in one way or the other, they were involved in peacebuilding. Therefore, as social actors they were experiencing life on the ground. This status motivated me to consider them as co-researchers.

In his article, *Participatory Action Research as a tool for Peacebuilding*, Stiefel emphasized the role of social actors and researchers this way:

If researchers and social actors work together as a team in a collective effort of research and analysis, the results obtained are better and reflect reality more effectively, because the participants bring to the research exclusive knowledge and understanding that would not otherwise be available (2001, p.273).

As noted in the previous Chapter, I planned to work with a group of participants in Seke not as an expert but as a co-researcher. The group that I worked with came to be known as a WPC after the peace committee was put in place as from 7 November 2014. The phrase WPC was used interchangeably with PAG throughout this study.

By 30 September 2014, many of the resolutions made on the 5th August 2014 by the ECLF evaluation team had not been implemented. The setting up of a peace committee had not been made, would-be peace committees members had not been identified, a plan to set up a peace committee was still being talked about, but the proposed plan had not yet been drafted. There were a myriad of reasons for the delay in setting up a WPC. The chief ones were: the district focal person did not have a standing committee to work with and ECLF had not provided guidelines on procedures for setting up a WPC. There were no terms of reference for the setting up of a peace committee. ECLF had offered the responsibility of setting up a peace committee to Ward 8 trained participants. The delay in the implementation of the resolutions could be attributed to a number of factors, one of which could be the lack of enthusiasm by trained participants in Ward 8, including myself or other unknown factors. However, this delay in setting up a peace committee created a vacuum and I was eager to take up the challenge of setting up a peace committee working with a small advisory team.

The impetus to set up a WPC with trained participants was sustained by three factors. Firstly, deliberations that took place on 5 August 2014 in which it was clearly stated that the process to setting up of peace committee was a responsibility of residents in Ward 8. Second, to meet my PhD field work requirements, I had planned to work with a small advisory team in the setting up of a peace committee. I made consultations first with the district focal person and later with the provincial focal person. Third, using insights gained from the reviewed literature on informal peace committees and PAR, I was left with no option than to work with people that I already knew. Working with participants that have been trained in peacebuilding was an advantage and more so, we were trained in the same course, meaning that there was greater potential that we could speak the same language.

In literature, for example, I had discovered that in Nepal, as Odendaal (2010, p.61) notes, there were part-time facilitators who provided technical support in processes involving the setting up of peace

committees. Correspondingly, the technical support, those who served as resource persons, were the district and the provincial focal persons and myself. These three served as technical support prior to the setting up of a WPC. Accordingly, on 30 September 2014, I met the district focal person at a “Peace and the Constitution” workshop under the auspices of Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe. This was a half-day workshop that I was going to facilitate between 09:00 and 13:00. The workshop was conducted at the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe (AFM) church, Ziko Township in Ward 8 of Seke district.

People from a wide cross-section of the community in Ward 8 were invited for the “Peace and the Constitution” workshop. On the day in question, 30 September, Pastor 00010 arrived and I inquired whether a peace committee had been established yet. Pastor 00010 pointed out that a peace committee was not yet established. Instead, he highlighted that plans to set up a peace committee were underway but there was nothing tangible yet, as he had no standing committee to work with. Upon hearing this, I took the opportunity to share with him my plans to discuss possibilities of working together on the issue of forming a partnership while I carry out my studies in Ward 8. I explained to him that I was interested to work with him in setting up of a peace committee in Ward 8 if he was prepared to partner with me. We closed this discussion and I promised to make an appointment to take this discussion further another day after this workshop. The stages taken during this period followed the PAR cycles.

6.3 PAR cycles in Ward 8: 10 October 2014 to 22 July 2015.

This section chronicles the different stages undertaken by the researcher and his co-researchers in Ward 8 of Seke district in setting up a WPC.

Phase 1 & 2: Problem identification and action planning:

Friday 10 October 2014: I called Pastor 00010 at 08:00 in the morning to find out whether he was available and ready to resume discussions on plans to set up a peace committee. He told me that he was available from 16:00; at that time, I arrived at Pastor 00010’s residence.

The purpose of the visit was to share plans involving the setting up of a peace committee. I explained in more detail the purpose of my research, that I had plans to set up a pilot peace committee working with a small advisory team from start to finish. After providing this explanation, I showed him a letter of introduction written by my supervisor and UKZN ethical clearance letter which confirmed that this study involved the establishment of a peace committee (see Appendix 1 and 2 respective). I Further explained to him that all the preparatory stages were important for my research and I therefore asked whether he was willing to have all our discussions recorded for ease of analysis of the processes involving the setting

up of a peace committee. I assured Pastor 00010 that any information relating to the setting up of the peace committee was to be kept in strict confidentiality and that in my report I was not going to use real names unless otherwise members I plan to work with wishes to have their real names disclosed. Pastor 00010 agreed that I could record for as long as I did not break the assurance of secrecy. We then tested the voice recorder.

Subsequently, we discussed a number of issues relating to how the peace committee should be formed. The following key points came out of this discussion:

- Booking an appointment with Ward 8 councillor first;
- Paying a visit to the ward councillor on a date to be identified with a view to share plans for setting up a peace committee;
- Identification of would-be peace committee members on the proposed date after sharing these plans with the ward councillor;
- Convening a meeting at 17:00 hours at Pastor 00010 resident on Wednesday 15 October 2014 in order to set the actual date to book an appointment with Ward 8 councillor.

Wednesday 15 October 2014. I met again with Pastor 00010 and I asked him what he had in mind on how the peace committee in Ward 8 was to be put in place. I asked this question in order to avoid getting into the trap of the expert syndrome in which I could suggest a course of action to him in order to get the process started. Since we had agreed on the previous day that I was going to record every discussion for purposes of data analysis, the whole discussion was recorded. The conversation went as follows:

Researcher: *What did you have in mind when you were given the responsibility to lead the process of setting up of a peace committee in Seke district, you being the district focal person?*

Pastor 00010: *Eh-e what came to my mind was that when the time comes for the setting up of a peace committee, No. 1, any potential candidate for the peace committee should have a basic understanding of the term peace and what it involves? No. 2, such a person should be someone who is willing because it's voluntary...this involves someone with a desire to see another person living peacefully. And you cannot do such a thing if you are that kind of a person who take sides but you should be someone who is ready to listen to people's stories with empathy, someone who walks through with people experiencing conflict so that the outcome will remain a win/win situation.*

Researcher: *Is that all that can be expected of those that make up a peace committee?*

Pastor 00010: *Even love itself is needed and also sacrifice as this is not an easy task because people can turn up against you as some may think that you are favouring some people than others or they may think you are playing dirty tricks with them. It's like in our country which is too political and was even more difficult to penetrate in communities, one need to be courageous and fearless... So people of such calibre are the ones that need to be identified because if you remember that day (5 August 2014, during evaluation meeting) some participants brought their political differences to the fore or to settle their communal differences using that platform.*

Researcher: *You mentioned already that potential candidates should have a basic understanding of peace and what it involves. How do you ascertain that so and so has some basic understanding of peace. In other words, what methods are you going to use to identify such kind of individuals?*

Pastor 00010: *Some of these things require one to listen attentively to individual testimonies as they come like that other day (during training between 15, 16 and 17 May 2013 and 5 August 2014). The fact that an individual decides to open up by way of telling his/her story is an opportunity for us to identify someone who understands what peace involves and you can tell that such a person has a heart for peace issues. It follows that for an individual to qualify for a peace committee s/he must have been trained by ECLF.*

Researcher: *what else can assist us to ascertain that so and so has a heart for peace issues?*

Pastor 00010: *During a one on one or group discussion a lot of things will be happening which can give you an idea that so and so is involved in peace issues because it's an opportunity that availed itself but also you can easily see that so and so has a heart for peace issues because s/he will be putting his/her mind on it.*

Researcher: *Ok. So far are there any potential participants for the peace committee whom you can identify right now?*

Pastor 00010: *Yes individuals that I can identify are already there?*

Researcher: *Roughly how many do you think you can identify both men and women?*

Pastor 00010: *E-e! I think there are two mature women.*

Researcher: *How about men?*

Pastor 00010: *I know one man. He is not stable but is a hard worker. There is another male Pastor, but I also do not know much about him on issues to do with peace.*

Researcher: *Looking at all the 155 participants that were trained at the AFM in Zimbabwe church between 15, 16 and 17 May 2014, how many can you identify?*

Pastor 00010: *Using pick and choose selection process, I think seven or eight can be identified.*

Researcher: *I remember that other lady who when she spoke, she was speaking so vividly and is a member of ZANU (PF) party, do you know her? I do not know whether you still remember her well?*

Pastor 00010: *Ya-a she is one of the two mature women I was talking about.*

Researcher: *Ok. She is the one you were talking about. How about the headmaster's wife that you mentioned before, that she gave a touching testimony during training between 15, 16 and 17 May 2014?*

Pastor 00010: *Yes ya!, the headmaster's wife.*

Researcher: *Then, there is another lady from Rusirei village who is slim. If you remember, she narrated her story on how the CPMRT sensitization workshop helped her to deal with intra-personal conflict on 5 August 2014 during evaluation meeting. So now there are three women... So we are using testimony, the ability to open up and willingness towards issues of peace as the criteria, is that all? I think this will help us to identify potential participants for the peace committee.*

Pastor 00010: *Eh as for others we will coach them as we go once they are members of the peace committee.*

Researcher: *So maybe if we are to visit the provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012, as we discuss over this issue of setting up a peace committee with him, we can always advise him that individual testimonies can also be considered as one of the criterion. We advise him that after identifying such individuals using the workshop attendance register we can contact them and then invite them for an information meeting. On that information meeting we discuss with them with to secure a buy-in and once this is done we can then form a peace committee with them.*

Pastor 00010: *Here we are building an executive peace committee which will be responsible for the formation of other committees in all the other wards in Seke district. In other words, this peace committee will supervise all the other committees to be established in future.*

Well I don't know but we will hear from the provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012 but in my view I think this is the way this peace committee is supposed to be created. Provincial focal person should give us some guidelines but the whole business of creating a peace committee is in our hands. What we see fit is what should be on the ground.

Researcher: *As we go step by step we will be giving reports to the provincial focal person. Again whenever there is need for any one of us to speak about the formation of a peace committee here in Seke, I will not speak but will give space to you as the district focal person to take the lead. However, wherever you want me to go in relation to the formation of a peace committee I am readily available.*

The foregoing discussion was made in order to make sense of what Pastor 00010 had in mind with regard to the criteria and procedures for setting up a pilot peace committee in Ward 8. From the discussion above we agreed that the criteria for would-be peace committee members should look like this:

Table 10: Criteria for would-be peace committee members

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- Knowledge and understanding of peace issues
 - An individual with this attribute should have the capacity to generate win/win outcomes out of a conflict situation
 - Such an individual should have courage
 - An individual who is open-mindedness which should be evidenced by willingness to share good and bad experiences
 - An individual with whole-heartedness evidenced by willingness to cooperate with other people
 - An ECLF trained participant
-

Source: Fieldwork 2014.

After these discussions we finally resolved to seek audience with the provincial focal person on this matter. Pastor 00010 was to make an appointment with him and advise me accordingly. I had pledged to meet transport costs for the visit to the provincial focal person on the proposed date of meeting on 17 October.

Friday 17 October 2014: Pastor 00010 and I boarded a taxi to a place where we had planned to have a meeting with Chaplain 00012. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold: first, to be sanctioned by the

provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012 to set up a peace committee. Second, to inform him about the purpose of my research and that I had volunteered myself to work with Pastor 00010 as a researcher and an eligible would-be peace committee member in Ward 8. Thus, the meeting was to serve as a launch pad towards the setting up of a peace committee in Ward 8 of Seke district. This meeting was convened at a shop veranda at Makoni shopping centre, Chitungwiza, Seke, as from 11:05 to 13:07. The discussion went as follows:

Researcher: *I am an interested party in Seke. My research involves the formation of a peace committee in Seke. So I am willing to partner with the district focal person in the planning and setting up of a peace committee in Seke. Again, since I am an ECLF trained participant as well as a researcher I have the desire to work with members of the community and to offer support in any possible way to ensure that the peace committee in Seke is put in place and I will not take the lead. The district focal person should continue to lead the process and I am willing to work with him in setting up of a peace committee while I do my research. I first consulted with him and I told him the purpose of my research and asked whether we could work as a team in the establishment of a peace committee in Seke. I explained to him that I will not be at the forefront in the formation of the peace committee but will work as a team member. The reason for being here today is to tell you my story. This explains why I am here today with the district focal person.*

Chaplain 00012: *It's possible you can work together. But what we are going to do is we are no longer going to mobilize people for CPMRT. What the two of you need to do is to identify potential participants that have been trained and then establish a peace committee.*

Researcher: *How do you establish peace committees in ECLF?*

Chaplain 00012: *They do. Ehe, because if ECLF form a peace committee it is not going to be owned by the community.*

Researcher: *But when communities form peace committees do you tell them what to do?*

Chaplain 00012: *We advise.*

Researcher: *What are some of the advises that you give to communities wanting to establish an LPC?*

Chaplain 00012: *One, an LPC has to be inclusive. That is the point of call of peace committees. Because they cannot build peace committee with ZANU PF members only.*

Researcher: *What are the two criteria?*

Chaplain 00012: *...ehe... potential peace committee members should be individuals who understand issues of peace. ECLF assumes that after a three day sensitization workshop participants should have a basic knowledge and understanding of peace issues. In theory, we do not form peace committees with individuals who have not been trained before but technically, there can be challenges because we end up forming peace committees with members of one political party who have been trained leaving out members of other political parties that have not been trained.*

In any ward, a peace committee should include any one of the following as ex-officio members namely chiefs, headmen or councillors. Nevertheless, we always recommend that a ward peace committee should be chaired by a minister of religion or any other church member only in cases where ministers of religion have not attended CPMRT workshops. We also recommend that communities should elect at least 15 peace committee members for now comprising of the chair

person, deputy chairperson, the secretary, deputy secretary and treasurer to make them five. The rest will be committee members. It will follow that developmental initiatives will make use of these structures. So we are saying, in a peace committee youth should be represented, governments departments such as education, health and other sectors such as war veterans, and women's league should be represented in Seke district.

Chaplain 00012: *Seke is too big maybe we can only form a peace committee at district or ward level. Unfortunately, I have to say this that we never had any training which included any councillor. This is different with Mudzi and Wedza districts and other places where we conducted CPMRT workshops and councillors were also participants. But still we need to include councillors in any peace committee. The advantage in Seke is that we have had one headman who was trained. So to form a peace committee we can use the monitoring and evaluation register [5 August evaluation register] to identify potential peace committee members and then we call them for an information meeting.*

As the discussion progressed, Chaplain 00012 suggested two options that we could possibly adopt to set up a peace committee in Seke.

Option 1

Chaplain 00012: *The first is that we can identify participants from different wards and then we form a district peace committee. This is partly so because in Seke we haven't trained people in every ward. We trained people in six places namely; Zhakata; two workshops at Dema t/ship; another in Beatrice, one at Chirasavana, another at Makumbe and another at Ziko t/ship.*

All: *The majority of trained participants attended the evaluation meeting at Ziko t/ship on 5 August 2014.*

Chaplain 00012: *Participants who were invited for the evaluation meeting were 30 in total but now need to cut them down to say 20.*

Option 2

Chaplain 00012: *The second is to establish a ward peace committee.*

Researcher: *If the peace committee is at ward level it is not burdensome because we know some of the participants who were trained.*

Chaplain 00012: *If it's a ward peace committee, we then say who represents the church. Church is a chief stakeholder in peacebuilding. We usually want to entrust issues to do with peace to the church. So those ministers of religion who have been trained consistently, we recommend that they take up the chairperson's position. Even if we do not have trained ministers of religion, we recommend that any trained mature Christian can assume the chairperson's position. We are saying we cannot entrust the work of peace to politicians. That is another way of forming a peace committee at ward level which I think it's easier because even in Mudzi district we currently do not have a peace committee at district level. We are saying after establishing at ward level peace committee we can then co-opt all the ward chairpersons to form a district peace committee in Seke.*

Researcher: *I think if we start at ward level thereafter it can be possible to establish a district peace committee.*

Chaplain 00012: *Yes that way it could be easier. I think we can actually do that in Seke. What will be needed is to capacitate them through a two-days training. So the first stage is let's identify would-be peace committee members. We co-opt them using evaluation meeting register. Start with Ward 8 and leave out participants from other wards. The ward peace committee should be*

inclusive don't worry about individuals that have not been trained. Untrained individuals will catch up as we start walking.

Researcher: *How many members should this peace committee have in the first place?*

Chaplain 00012: *Let them be 15 to 20 members. The entry point should be the councillor or headman for mobilizing participants for the peace committee. This should be done as soon as possible. So we are saying police should be represented but any police representative should ideally be someone engaged in neighbourhood watch because they are members of the community. They don't get transferred to some other places like regular police officers. For that reason, neighbourhood watches are best people to work with because their task is to work with communities of origin and are more into early warning. Our target is to get to 2018 having nipped into the bud the behaviours of individuals and groups so that electoral violence is put under close check because 2013 there was no electoral violence. We can actually transform our communities.*

Themes that emerged from this discussion include:

- Options to set up a district peace committee or WPC;
- The involvement of the ward councillor in the peace committee;
- Ministers of religion as chairperson of the committee;
- The peace committee could possibly have 15 to 20 members and
- The committee was to have women, youth, government departments and other stakeholders.

These themes were instrumental in the formation of the WPC. For instance, owing to this discussion, we decided to have a 15-member peace committee in Ward 8 (These themes are discussed in detail in Chapter Eight). After this meeting Pastor 00010 and myself made plans to meet on 21 October to reflect on the discussions with Chaplain 00012.

Tuesday 21 October 2014: I paid a visit to Pastor 00010. The purpose of the visit was to review the outcome of the consultation and discussions made with Chaplain 00012. The outcome of the meeting with Chaplain 00012 was that a Ward 8 peace committee should be formed with immediate effect. During the meeting with Chaplain 00012, it was resolved that members that were from other wards should not be part of Ward 8 peace committee. It was also stressed that members that have not undergone the CPMRT were not to be co-opted into the WPC.

In view of the deliberations made on 17 October, our first port of call involved the identification of would-be WPC members. The original intention was to use the 5 August 2014, evaluation meeting register. Unfortunately, Pastor 00010 did not have the correct register with 30 Ward 8 members who attended the evaluation on 5 August 2014. Thus, we used our memory to identify potential members that were resident in Ward 8. The first batch of would-be peace committee members is captured on the table below:

Table 11: First batch of would-be peace committee members

-
- Mrs. 00013, she is resident in Ward 8;
 - Pastor 00011, he is resident in Ward 8;
 - Pastor 00010, he is the district focal person, a steering committee chairperson and resident in Ward 8;
 - Researcher, he is resident in Ward 8;
 - Mr. 00014, he is resident in Ward 8;
 - The headmaster's wife was not eligible in that she was trained but was resident in ward 4. We scraped her off from the list of potential participants;
 - Female pastor was also eligible because she was trained but was resident in ward 7. We scrapped her off from the list of would-be WPC participants in Ward 8.
-

Source: Fieldwork.

Of the seven would-be peace committee members, only five would-be peace committee members were eligible as residents of Ward 8. In terms of gender representation, we had identified four men and one woman. In order to ensure equal representation in terms of gender and to achieve the target of 15 would-be peace committee members for Ward 8, we agreed to make consultations with some would-be peace committee members to nominate the names of eligible participants resident in Ward 8. This discussion went as follows:

Researcher: *These participants that we nominated can be asked to provide names of other eligible participants that were trained. We will ask them to provide names of women that were trained. At least two or three women will do. And then, if I may ask, do we have teachers that were trained?*

Pastor 00010: *Ummmm..I don't remember. Teachers were not part of the training. One reason why they did not come for training was that it was conducted mid-week.*

Researcher: *So we have four men and one woman.*

Pastor 00010: *There are a number of women. Mrs.00013 will assist us in the identification of other eligible women.*

Researcher: *Pastor 00011 of the AFM in Zimbabwe church, where training was conducted can assist in the identification of other eligible participants*

Pastor 00010: *There is a village head's wife nearby who can also be co-opted. Again Mrs. 00013 will assist us in the identification of all those women that are eligible. In fact Mrs. 00013 is the one who assisted us in mobilizing people to come for the CPMRT in 2013. I still believe that if we ask her to help in the identification of women who trained she can be of great help in that regard.*

Researcher: *Ok. So I will have to look for a US\$2 note for air time so you can give her to make calls to eligible participants. You can tell her that we are looking for more women that have been trained who are also residents in Ward 8. Because there is need for more women to be part of the peace committee.*

Pastor 00010: *For now we can say we have five eligible participants for Ward 8 peace committee.*

Researcher: *It means that if we want to have 20 participants we are left with 15 more but if we need 15 we are left with only 10 more.*

Before the meeting came to a close we came up with the following key result areas:

- Our next planning meeting was scheduled for Thursday 30 October 2014, at 18:00 hours;
- Pastor 00010 was to collect a name list from an evaluation meeting; attendance register from Chaplain 00012 by 30 October 2014. The name list was to assist us in the identification of would-be peace committee members resident in Ward 8;
- We proposed Saturday 1 November 2014, as the information meeting day for would-be peace committee members residents in Ward 8
- I was going to bring with me a US\$2 note for air time for Pastor 00010 to make calls on 30 October 2014, during the planning meeting;
- Pastor 00010 was going to make appointments with would-be peace committee members residents in Ward 8, in preparations for Ward 8 information meeting on 1 November 2014;

The purpose of the information meeting was to secure a buy-in from would-be peace committee after convincing them that a peace committee was worthwhile. We agreed that the informational meeting was to be convened at the AFM in Zimbabwe church, the venue where CPMRT training and evaluation meetings were held.

Thursday 30 October 2014: On this day we could not meet as previously planned because I was tied up with other commitments beyond my control. I advised Pastor 00010 on 29 October that I was not going to make it. The meeting was rescheduled for 31 October.

Friday 31 October 2014: On Friday 31 October, I made it to Pastor 00010's residence. The purpose of the meeting was to identify an additional number of would-be peace committee members out of the name list. The identification was to be followed up by booking appointments of would-be peace committee members for an information meeting scheduled for the next day Saturday 1 November 2014. We identified four more would-be peace committee members who were resident in Ward 8 including the ward councillor. Thus, of the five that we identified on 21 October we added four more to make a total of nine would-be peace committee members. The second batch of would-be peace committee members is captured on the table below:

Table 12: Additional batch of would-be peace committee members

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- The wife of the village headman, resident in Ward 8;
 - The councillor of Ward 8;
 - A neighbourhood watch, a member of the ZRP in ward 8;
 - A neighbourhood watch, a member of the ZPR in ward 8.

Source: Fieldwork.

The total number of would-be peace committee members increased from five to nine by 31 October 2014. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we could not make calls to book all the identified participants because Pastor 00010 was going to travel on Saturday 1 November 2014 in order to attend to some pressing issues. Thus, we decided to postpone the information meeting scheduled for Saturday 1 November, to a later date. Although these plans were at an advanced stage, I could not take the responsibility to invite would-be peace committee members to an information meeting. This responsibility was not mine. In addition, I had pledged from the start during the planning stages to both the district and provincial focal persons that I was not going to take over the responsibility which involved making calls to would-be peace committee members for an information meeting. These responsibilities belonged to Pastor 00010. His absence on Saturday 1 November 2014 meant that we had only one option, that is, to reschedule to another convenient date and that is what we did.

The important thing to note is that the provincial focal person had given the responsibility of setting up a peace committee to the district focal person; I was the district focal person's assistant but he was also my co-researcher. Therefore, taking over such a responsibility could easily be interpreted as gate-crashing on my part. For that reason, I was careful not to take over such a responsibility as a researcher and a would-be peace committee member. Thus, I distanced myself from the temptation to fast-track the process in order to maintain the natural course of events. Also, I was well aware that Pastor 00010 was the one sanctioned by the provincial focal person to facilitate the setting up of a peace committee. I was careful to maintain my position although the process was flexible to the extent that I could also offer suggestions but I had resolved in my mind that I was not going to call for an information meeting because this responsibility belonged to Pastor 00010 as the facilitator of the process. Thus, as a researcher and a would-be peace committee member I needed to be careful not to take responsibilities which did not belong to me.

Before the close of this meeting, we discussed about the criteria for membership into the peace committee. This was a recap on our discussion on 15 October and the subsequent discussion with the provincial focal person on 17 October regarding the criteria for would-be WPC members. As we were discussing, I advised Pastor 00010 that inclusiveness was one of the critical features of a peace committee which was extensively covered in literature. I voiced this aspect on the basis of authorities in this area such as Odendaal (2008, p.4) and van Tongeren (2013, p.40) who strongly emphasized that a peace committee comprised of stakeholders of all conflicting groups. However, for VPCs, the issue of

inclusivity, as I realized later, did not mean the involvement of conflicting parties because in the villages inclusivity refers to a mix of different social groups such as women elderly, and youth, not necessarily those in conflict.

In Ward 8, the issue of inclusivity referred to by Odendaal and van Tongeren applied to Somalia and the Wajir in which peace committees were formed by representatives of various factions. In Ward 8, inclusivity meant the inclusion of women, youth and men in the same committee. As a way forward, Pastor 00010 gave me the responsibility to come up with consolidated criteria for potential peace committee participants to our next meeting on the 5th of November 2014 and I agreed to take up the responsibility. At the close of the meeting, we proposed Friday 7 November 2014 as the day for the information meeting. In Seke, Fridays are days of rest from daily labour and therefore we proposed to have our meetings on Fridays because it is a convenient day for would-be peace committee members. Key result areas were:

- To have a planning meeting on Tuesday 4 November 2014 at 18:00 hours;
- To bring in a four-point consolidated criteria on qualities for would-be peace committee members;
- All would-be peace committee members were to be contacted telephonically and book them for the information meeting on Tuesday 4 November;

Tuesday 4 November 2014: As previously planned I arrived at Pastor's 00010 resident at 18:20 hours. I did not find him because he had travelled. I left a word with his daughter that I was going to come again on Wednesday 5 November, at 17:00 hours, for the planning meeting with him. I had no airtime in my phone so I could not make a call except to leave a word of mouth. I went back home to plan for another day.

Wednesday 5 November 2014: The purpose of this meeting was two-fold: to review the consolidated criteria for would-be peace committee members and to assess progress towards making bookings for the information meeting scheduled for 7 November 2014. I presented the following criteria into our discussion:

Table 13: Criteria for would-be peace committee members

-
- A would-be peace committee member must have been trained by ECLF.
 - S/he must be resident in Ward 8
 - s/he must have interest in peace issues (someone who is passionate about building peace);

- The peace committee should be inclusive with stakeholders from different religious and political groups.
- Would-be peace committee member should not regard the peace committee as a platform for political agendas but peacebuilding;
- Potential stakeholder must be reliable, trustworthy and peaceable;
- Have keen sense and experience in resolving conflict without the use of violence;
- Potential stakeholder must be willing to offer voluntary service to the community.

Source: Fieldwork.

I handed over this typed criteria to Pastor 00010 and together we read through one by one in order to make sense of what each criterion implied. I explained one after another in order to have similar understanding with Pastor 00010. We then adopted all the eight points and agreed that on the day of the information meeting, he was going to read through each of the criterion as well as providing some explanations to all would-be peace committee members to get them to understand what the information meeting was for.

As we were going through the criteria we noted that what criterion number one suggested was obvious, that any would-be peace committee member should have undergone the CPMRT sensitization workshop not only in Seke but anywhere else around Zimbabwe. This point was emphasized again and again by the provincial and district focal persons during planning meetings so I found it more appropriate to put it as criterion number one. Criterion number two was also important because the peace committee was meant for residents in Ward 8. Criterion number three emerged from our discussion with Pastor 00010 on 15 October 2014 and I considered it very crucial because it was focused on one's knowledge, passion and understanding of the concept of peace and what it involves. Criterion number four was focused on inclusiveness which was emphasized by the provincial and district focal persons. In literature, inclusiveness means the inclusion of antagonists as major stakeholders of a peace committee. As discussed above, in Ward 8 inclusiveness meant a committee involving women, youth and men. For criterion number five which reads: *'The peace committee member should not regard the peace committee as a platform for political agendas but peacebuilding'* was crafted against an understanding that some rural communities in Zimbabwe were politically sensitive. I captured this notion from our planning and consultation meetings that communities in Seke are politically sensitive. Therefore, to ensure that a peace committee was not to be mistaken with a political platform, this point had to be emphasized. Criterion numbers six, seven and eight were focused more on the individual's attitude towards peace and what is involved in peace issues. These aspects were central in the discussion that unfolded on 15 and 17 October 2014. Apart from these criteria, I also factored in a section on benefits of becoming a member of a WPC. These were they:

Table 14: Benefits of membership

-
- Opportunities for training in peacebuilding
 - Opportunities for participating in income-generating projects such as revolving loan fund
 - Opportunities for networking with other peace committees and organizations;
 - Opportunities for learning new life skills;
 - Opportunities for improved livelihoods
-

Source: Fieldwork.

I factored in the benefits of being a member of the peace committee because it was also emphasized during our planning meetings. For example, on 17 November 2014, the provincial focal person highlighted that there will be capacity building workshops aimed at adding value to those that are members of LPCs. Also, from his narrations of stories in Mudzi and Chivi districts I picked that there were opportunities for income generating projects, improved livelihoods and possibilities of networking with other peace committee members once an individual had volunteered to become a member of the peace committee.

Before we read through these benefits I explained to Pastor 00010 how I came about with a section on the benefits of becoming a peace committee member. He did not dispute but commended that benefits of becoming a member provided in fact incentives to those who could wish to volunteer to become members of the WPC. We then read through each item together trying to make sense of each suggested benefit of membership. At the end, Pastor 00010 commended me for coming up with these two items and we agreed that he was going to read all the items under benefits of membership.

Before the close of the meeting, we came up with the following key result areas:

- That we were going to meet on Thursday 6 November and try to update the name list which we failed to complete on 5 November because we were more focused on the criteria;
- To identify more would-be peace committee members in order to have a 15-member team by 6 November 2014;
- To get set for an information meeting on Friday 7 November 2014.
- I was going to provide US\$3 for airtime to make calls to each of the 15 would-be peace committee members.
- To convene two meetings on 6 November 2014, morning and evening in order to adequately prepare for the information meeting on Friday 7 November 2014.

Thursday 6 November 2014: On this day, I arrived at Pastor's 00010 residence. The purpose was to identify would-be peace committee members for the peace committee and then invite them for an

information meeting on the proposed date, Friday 7 November 2014. Pastor 00010, being the district focal person was responsible for making calls to all potential participants and to invite all would-be peace committee members to the information meeting on the proposed date. I handed over the air time worth US\$3 to be used by Pastor 00010 to book the identified would-be peace committee members for the information meeting which we had scheduled the next day on 7 November 2014.

In a bid to find out the best approach for Pastor 00010 to convey the message involving the setting up of a WPC on the information meeting we got into a discussion, when Pastor 00010 said the following sentiments:

Pastor 00010: *Most community members think that issues to do with peace are political. So we want to do away with such kind of thinking. Our approach is that what is called peace begins with you as an individual, which spreads to your household and then goes out into the community. That is the story about peace. Peace does not fall from heaven we have to create it!*

I then posed a question in response to these sentiments:

Researcher: *By the way what was the purpose of the evaluation by ECLF on 5 August 2014 so that we can have a foothold to start from for the information meeting tomorrow?*

Pastor 00010: *Those people [ECLF evaluation team] wanted to find out the extent to which community members in Seke responded to the training that they offered... In other words, they wanted to find out if trained individuals in Seke have realized any benefits out of the training starting with trained participants then to the community at large.*

Researcher: *So I think this should be the entry point when you present this issue to would-be peace committee members tomorrow. So you could say, following the evaluation on 5 August 2014, which was aimed at finding out whether the community had benefited through the CPMRT programme, we noted during the evaluation through testimonies that were given by some participants that Seke community has benefited. Further on, you could say, if the community has benefited, there is need for duty bearers. Duty bearers are peace builders by another name. This is the reason why I invited you today to discuss together how we can come up with duty bearers who are to be known as a WPC.*

Pastor 00010: *Ya sure let's take this approach!*

We then agreed that when all invited would-be peace committee members come for the information meeting the district focal person was to inform them that the provincial focal person gave him the mandate to identify would-be peace committee members. Further on, we agreed that he should highlight that the reason for calling for the information meeting was to hear what trained participants have to say about having our own peace committee in Ward 8 of Seke district. From our perspective, this approach was not suggestive but sought to secure a buy-in from participants on the need for a WPC. This we did to avoid suggesting to participants on what to do. Thus, we agreed that Pastor 00010 was to introduce his subject matter starting with evaluation since it was the entry point out of which a resolution to set up a peace committee was suggested.

Another aspect that generated discussion was the procedure for creating the peace committee structure, that is how office bearers in the peace committee were to be taken on different positions. During discussions with the provincial focal person on 17 November 2014, office bearers included the chairperson, deputy, secretary, deputy secretary, treasurer and deputy treasurer and committee members. In light of this discussion, I made the following proposal and eventually a discussion was generated:

Researcher: *I was thinking that since we are expecting 15 participants and we are expecting about eight office bearers. In my view, if we select eight and leave the rest without positions in the peace committee it may not auger well with them. I suggest that participants should vote themselves into offices such as deputy chair, secretary, treasurer and the rest automatically become committee members. I think it makes sense because a peace committee should have members ranging from 15 or more. Since the chairperson is there already that is the district focal person, we vote from deputy chairperson, secretary and other posts.*

Pastor 00010: *For now voting for a deputy chair I think can be difficult. I can use the little powers that I have to appoint my deputy.*

Researcher: *Oh ok, so you can also appoint!*

Pastor 00010: *Yes, in the mean time I will appoint because I know who is currently doing what but in the short run participants are going to vote themselves into various positions.*

Researcher: *Alright! Alright!*

Pastor 00010: *There are some posts such as deputy, secretary which I can appoint for the mean time. You are one of the appointees I am considering for the position of a deputy chair.*

Researcher: *For me a post like deputy chair please do not put me there. No please!*

Pastor 00010: *That is the post which I was thinking to put you there [deputy chair of peace committee] because I know some people are not easy to work with especially if you do not know who they are. Off course participants are going to vote for themselves in the short run.*

Researcher: *Ok! So it means participants are going to vote for themselves in the short run.*

Pastor 00010: *Participants may not provide us with a true picture out of a voting system because they do not know each other yet. Yes they are from Ward 8 but they come from different villages. Since this is the beginning, appointment is the only option because when you start a thing its best to allow it to start walking first then you move to the next step. So appointment can be the ideal option for now although it is not the best.*

Researcher: *So I think it's important for you to explain to participants that as the district focal person you will appoint starting with the deputy then after some time participants will vote for themselves.*

Pastor 00010: *During the course of the process after appointment participants should be able to identify between themselves who should take which position. So if we vote without having time to observe each other we are likely to encounter challenges. So we will vote after establishing a peace committee by appointment first.*

During the discussions I had proposed that Pastor 00010 to be the chairperson of the WPC by virtue of his position as the person who was already appointed to facilitate the process and he agreed. I made this proposal deriving strength from the self-selection model which suggests that members can request to

occupy certain positions at community forums. Within the same framework, Pastor 00010 expressed his desire that I become his deputy but I opted out for the post of a secretary of the committee which he agreed. The merits of being a secretary outweighed those of being a deputy chairperson in my own view.

I was already a participant as well as an observer, this post was going to give me the opportunity to access information which I could otherwise not have access to if I was not the secretary. I did not campaign for it but I opted to take this position after Pastor 00010 had indicated to me that he desired to work with me as the deputy chairperson in the WPC because we had walked through the planning process together. Pastor 00010's willingness to work with me was a privilege in that I worked with an advisory team not as an outsider but as an insider. This was an opportunity worth mentioning for me. Some of the merits that motivated me to work with the people I had prior contacts with were mentioned already such as that I had attended a mediation skills training workshop in 2011, a CPMRT in 2013 and the evaluation in 2014. On this basis, I was a potential would-be peace committee member in ward 8. So I felt it was a privilege to be part of the team that was to spearhead the setting up of a WPC. I also had to fulfil my academic obligations to set up a peace committee in Ward 8 in 2014. For that reason, I considered the offer to the position of a deputy chairperson an honour but with the permission of Pastor 00010, I opted for the post of secretary - a position which requires accountability to all the members, writing of minutes during meetings and custody of all official records of the WPC. I was prepared to take up this challenge and I did it for nine months: from 30 September 2014 to 22 July 2015.

Finally, we made a number of agreements: In the first place, we agreed that the district focal person was going to appoint a female deputy chairperson, Mrs 00013, the lady we gave the responsibility to mobilize and to bring four other women with her. In the second place, we agreed that I was going to occupy the position of a secretary in the WPC once buy-in was secured on the information meeting. Third and final point was that we also agreed that these three posts were critical and therefore for a start the district focal person was going to make appointments only for these two critical positions: the deputy and secretary. The rest of the posts were open to the audience to use their discretion in selecting whomsoever they saw fit to fill up vacant posts such as treasurer and committee members.

Before the meeting came to a close, we agreed that Pastor 00010 was going to secure for buy-in from all would-be peace committee members to set up a WPC on 7 November 2014. Thus, we agreed that although we walked together in making plans, the responsibility remained with the district focal person to convince all the invited would-be peace committee members that having a WPC was a good thing for the Ward. We agreed that the WPC was to be chaired temporarily by the district focal person, deputized by a

woman, the secretary was to be occupied by Mr. N. Chivasa, the researcher, and the rest of the posts were to be filled by all the other would-be peace committee members present at the information meeting.

After this discussion we agreed to make calls to all the would-be peace committee members for an information meeting scheduled for 7 November 2014. I handed over the airtime worth US\$3 to make calls. I took the responsibility to finance all telephone calls not to gain favours from the district focal person but I considered it a privilege to offer support in that area because there was no standing committee to mobilize funds for telephone bills. Also, since this peace committee was part of my PhD task, I took this responsibility as a privilege to get the ball rolling. We agreed that when the district focal person makes calls he was to advise all individuals invited for the information meeting that:

I am Pastor 00010. As you remember that on 5 August 2014, trained participants made a resolution to set up a peace committee. So, I as the district focal person, I invite you for an information meeting with other invited stake holders to map the way forward for that peace committee. Would you please spare 45 minutes to an hour on Friday 7 November for an information meeting at AFM in Zimbabwe church where we held both the CPMRT sensitisation workshop and evaluation meeting. The information meeting will commence at 9 o'clock in the morning.

From our perspective, this message was not suggestive but persuasive in that the message sought to call all stakeholders invited to put their heads together and chart the way forward in pursuance of the 5 August evaluation resolution which suggested that a peace committee was worthwhile.

The first call was made to Mrs. 00013 who confirmed she was willing to come. The district focal person contacted this lady first because she was the one who mobilized people for a CPMRT sensitisation workshop between 15, 16 and 17 May 2013. Also, we had agreed that this lady was to be given the responsibility to bring with her four more women who had undergone the CPMRT sensitisation workshop for the information meeting. Furthermore, the district focal person contacted three men who confirmed over the phone that they were going to come making a total of 10 would-be peace committee members including the two of us: the district focal person and I.

During this planning meeting we made attempts to call the councillor and other would-be peace committee members but had problems with their cell phone numbers, and so we resolved to proceed with the information meeting with 10 would-be peace committee members who had confirmed to come. We were satisfied and convinced that five males and five females, giving a total of 10, was a good starting point if a WPC was to be put in place on 7 November.

Subsequently, we reviewed one sticking criterion for would-be peace committee members to explore possibilities on whether an MDC member(s) would-be participant should be co-opted to ensure that the committee was inclusive given that we already had identified well-known ZANU PF members who had demonstrated interest in the peace committee. This idea was informed by the notion that a peace committee can have 15 to 20 members. However, we finally settled to have 15 members. So we agreed that Pastor 00010 was to invite any MDC party member who lived nearby. The challenge we faced was that there was no known MDC party members who was trained by ECLF. However, we acknowledged that although there were MDC members who attended sensitisation workshops we could not ascertain who these individuals were due to polarization in our communities and we realized that most people, especially in rural areas, were reluctant to come to the open that they were MDC supporters for fear of reprisals.

Therefore, to ensure that the committee was to become inclusive we made a decision to extend an invitation to non-trained MDC members in order to be in step with the concept of inclusiveness. After a long debate on this matter, we made a decision to include even a non-trained MDC member following advice by Chaplain 00012. He highlighted that for the sake of inclusiveness, there are other stakeholders that can be invited and if they are willing to be part of the peace committee, they could still be considered as legitimate members even though they have not undergone the CPMRT sensitization workshops. Further, Chaplain 00012 emphasized that such members will have to receive induction training with the rest of the team after they become part of the peace committee. It was the consultation with the provincial focal person that gave us the strength to consider extending invitation to non-trained would-be peace committee members, in particular those belonging to the MDC party as they appeared to be a minority group in rural areas of Seke. Thus, to achieve inclusiveness we thought this was a good idea to include the relevant stakeholders such as political parties which include ZANU PF and MDC.

Another sensitive issue which was left inconclusive was the identification of one village head to represent village heads in Ward 8. We then concluded that the wife of the village head of Murisa village was to be invited to the information meeting to ensure the pilot peace committee was inclusive. The inclusion of traditional leadership such as village heads is greatly acknowledged in literature and so we agreed that at least a member representing these stakeholders should be co-opted into the pilot peace committee. Our greatest challenge was that the village head who attended the CPMRT sensitization workshop could not be contacted and therefore we thought it was ideal to co-opt the wife of a village head who attended the CPMRT sensitization workshop and most importantly she could easily be contacted.

Before the close of the meeting, Pastor 00010 contacted the provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012, to inform him through a phone call that Ward 8 information meeting will be held on 7 November and that some would-be peace committee members have already been identified and contacted. The provincial focal person indicated that he was not going to attend the information meeting but gave a nod that we should proceed with the meeting and inform him on progress.

Before the close of the meeting, we agreed to meet at 18:00 hours in the evening to do some final touch ups and also to remind all would-be peace committee participants about the first information meeting on 7 November. Before we left we agreed that the district focal person was going to remind all the would-be pilot peace committee members and to keep trying the councillor's mobile number and inform him about the information meeting.

As I was leaving at Pastor 00010's home, I was reflecting on what I had in mind regarding the creation of the peace committee. I thought it was ideal if the district focal person had to leave it open to all invited would-be peace committee members to select the deputy chairperson, the secretary, deputy and the treasurer and the rest of the posts. However, I was quick to adopt the district focal person's idea to allow him to make appointments for the two posts and then other posts were to become a responsibility of would-be peace committee members to select amongst themselves members to occupy vacant posts. I was comfortable with this idea that once a peace committee was established, a peacebuilding constitution was going to be written after which the peace committee was to periodically elect their members.

Thursday 6 November 2014: As per our planned meeting I arrived at Pastor 00010's house at 18:00 and got into the purpose of the meeting. Pastor 00010 had called and the lady who had promised to bring four more women had confirmed that she and the other ladies were ready for the meeting at 09:00 in the morning. He also called the councillor who indicated that he could not attend the information meeting due to other commitments but gave a nod that the meeting should go ahead. The district focal person also called three men and they confirmed that they were willing to come at 09:00 in the morning. The wife of the village head could not be found at her home. I brought a typed version of the criteria of the would-be participants and I handed it over to the district focal person in preparation for the next day's information meeting. The venue for the meeting was confirmed and we were satisfied with the preparations and so we agreed that we were going to meet at 08:45 at the proposed venue. Overall, the first stage of the PAR cycle was characterized by meetings, debates, reflections and this culminated in the writing of criteria for would-be WPC. The steering committee involved the provincial and distinct focal persons and I.

Phase 3: Taking action: 7 November 2014 to 22 July 2015

This section chronicles activities that took place involving the recruitment of would-be participants into the peace committee structure. Following a call by the district focal person on 6 November 2014 in the morning and evening, we met as previously planned. The information meeting was the first of its own kind, designed to put plans that have been made since 30 September 2014 to set up a WPC. The WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district was to serve as a model for other peace committee structures which were to be put in place in all the 21 different wards in Seke. Of the 10 members invited only six pitched up but we had planned to have 15 members.

When I arrived at the venue, the AFM church premises where the information meeting was to be convened at 08:45 there was no one. I went to Pastor's 00011 residence and we waited for about 10 minutes. As I was seated at his house, I saw Pastor 00010 coming to the venue for the information meeting. Pastor 00010 arrived ahead of us and we found him greeting three ladies that came before him. Together with Pastor 00011, we arrived behind Pastor 00010 at the venue and found three women who came for the information meeting seated facing each other.

The Information meeting on 7 November 2014: When we arrived at the venue Pastor 00010, called for order. He then asked one of the ministers of religion, Pastor 00011, to open the meeting with a word of prayer. After a prayer, Pastor 00010 gave an opening and welcome remark which commended all the six participants for responding to his call. He also gave an apology on behalf of the Ward 8 councillor for not being able to attend the information meeting. Pastor 00010 said that the purpose of the information meeting was to share the plan to set up a WPC at ward level. He pointed out that the call for an information meeting was a follow up to the evaluation meeting convened on 5 August 2014 in which 30 Ward 8 participants resolved that a peace committee was long overdue. Further, the district focal person pointed out that he had extended invitations to 10 participants but only six participants had turned up for the meeting. He then inquired from the six would-be peace committee participants to find out their views on what to do next since the remaining nine that were invited had not turned up.

There was general consensus among the six that had turned up that a peace committee was long overdue and the overriding view was that a WPC needed to be put in place. In support, one women who was later appointed to take the position of the deputy chairperson was quoted as saying that: "if we left our houses for purposes of setting up a peace committee there is no reason for us not to put it in place because that is the reason why we came to this place." This agreement by all would-be peace committee members gave the district focal person a mandate to make appointments. Before making appointments he read the

criteria for would-be peace committee members, the benefits of becoming a member of the WPC. Subsequently, he made appointments which comprised of the following nominations and positions:

Table 15: Would-be WPC members appointed: 7 November 2014

N(n=15)	Position	Co-option	Sex	Designation
1.	Chairperson	Present	Male	District focal person
2.	Deputy chairperson	Present	Female	Social worker
3.	Secretary	Present	Male	Researcher
4.	Deputy secretary	Present	Female	Subsistence Farmer
5.	Treasurer	Present	Female	Subsistence Farmer
6.	Deputy treasurer	Present	Male	Minister of religion
7.	Ex-officio member	Co-opted in absentia	Male	Ward 8 councillor
8.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Male	Police officer
9.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Male	Police officer
10.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Male	Retired Soldier
11.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Female	Health worker
13.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Female	Subsistence farmer
14.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Female	Village head
15.	Committee member	Co-opted in absentia	Female	Traditional healer

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Although I was one of the would-be peace committee participants, I had the opportunity to observe a number of dynamics associated with group meetings. For example, although the meeting was scheduled to start at 09:00 it got delayed by 19 minutes. I observed that all would-be peace committee participants “shared their experiences and listened to one another in an atmosphere of openness and understanding” (Reeler et al., 2009, p.183-4) and this drove them to want to meet every Friday until the end of December 2014. Immediately after receiving appointments, the newly appointed WPC members agreed to convene a meeting the same day. Prior to the appointment I had made an agreement with the chairperson of the peace committee that he was going to explain my position as the secretary and researcher and that by virtue of being peace committee members they automatically became an advisory team for my research. After Pastor 00010 had explained about my dual positions as a researcher and secretary, I was given time to explain further and I took the opportunity to explain the purpose of my research and how we have worked together with the district focal person up to the day of the information meeting.

To corroborate the explanations by the chairperson of the newly appointed WPC, I produced two letters, the ethical letter from UKZN and a letter written by my supervisor which spelled out that my research involved setting up a peace committee and the letter was first read by the chairperson to everyone and circulated among the members who were present (see Appendix 1 and 2). All the members present agreed to play an advisory role in this research. It appears most of them were conversant with the phrase advisory rather than co-researchers and so I then used what they were comfortable with. In summation, I had pledged that I was going to buy group t/shirts to help us become visible in the ward. At the end, there was general consensus that since it was the first day, there was need to convene a short meeting to chart the way forward.

6.4 Timeline of events for the WPC: 7 November 2014 to 22 July 2015.

This section chronicles events that took place over a period of nine months after the setting up of a peace committee in Ward 8 of Seke district, Mashonaland east province.

WPC meeting: Friday 7 November 2014: Following the establishment of the WPC, a meeting was convened. The induction was done after appointments. Since I knew ahead of time that I was going to be appointed the secretary, the district focal person handed over a minute book to me which I had donated prior to the appointment to record all what had transpired and the on-going meeting and I started recording the proceedings. In that meeting the following agreements were made that:

- The pilot peace committee was inevitable;
- That the WPC was to meet every Friday until December 2014;
- The functions of the peace committee was to build peace;
- There was need for peace committee members to be equipped with conflict resolution skills;
- The adoption of *Mukando* scheme to kick start income generating projects.

In his closing remarks, the district focal person, who was now chairperson of the WPC pointed out that a peace committee was long overdue. He also pointed out that peace should begin with the individual and should be translated into every day interactions. Further, the chairperson added that the peace committee should act as a bridge between conflicting parties at community level.

To corroborate, the newly appointed WPC members raised a number of issues related to peacebuilding: that it involves assisting the disadvantaged through the provision of food stuffs; paying of school fees for the under-privileged school children; and providing counselling services to the aggrieved in the villages. In similar thought, another participant was quoted as saying: *rugare harukwanisi kuvapo kana dumbu riine nzara* (peace is not built on empty stomachs). In support, another remarked that: “peace is not peace without food, shelter, school fees and health.” These sentiments were meant to convey the notions that the

WPC was to have a mammoth task ahead of it and this task involved provision of food and other basic necessities through income generating projects.

Within this framework, the idea of coming up with a mechanism for a peacebuilding framework as understood by participants in the peace committee led to the adoption of the revolving loan fund (henceforth referred to as *Mukando* scheme). The lady who was appointed the deputy chairperson of the WPC lobbied for the *Mukando* scheme that it was worthwhile for the peace committee to start its own group scheme. After she explained what was involved in running *Mukando* schemes, there was buy-in from the WPC and we started off by contributing US\$1 per each individual on that same day. Six of us contributed and we raised US\$6 which was loaned out to members of the scheme and those who borrowed were to pay back with an interest of 20 per cent. For instance, the person who borrowed US\$1 was to add an interest of R2 meaning s/he was to pay back US\$1, R2 and so on. So since the newly appointed peace committee agreed to meet every Friday, it became mandatory for those who borrowed to pay back on every Friday and this was done in order to increase the dividends.

Before the close of the meeting, Mrs 00013 advised the committee that there was a *Mukando* scheme at her house on 8 November and we all agreed to pay a visit in order to gain more knowledge on how it is run. Most of us had heard about *Mukando* scheme but have never experienced it hands-on. As such we were excited to visit and see for ourselves. The chairperson, secretary and another committee member agreed to attend. This *Mukando* scheme was facilitated by the deputy chairperson of the WPC (details of what I observed about *Mukando* scheme are in Chapter Seven). The meeting started at 09:20 and ended at 10:45 in the morning (observations made on 7 November 2014 are presented in Chapter Seven). The meeting closed with a word of prayer and we were hoping to meet in the next Friday 14 November as agreed by the newly appointed WPC. The secretary was to ensure that all the 15 members were informed and to remind them ahead of the meeting.

WPC meeting: Friday 14 November 2014: As the secretary I made efforts to contact every member of the peace committee and only nine confirmed and turned up for a meeting on 14 November. The agenda of the meeting involved making contributions to *Mukando* scheme, writing a *Mukando* constitution, members getting to know each other, a review of the *Mukando* scheme site visit and general encouragement. Of the 15 peace committee members nine, shown on Figure 11 inclusive of the researcher, pitched up for the meeting on 14 November.



Figure 11: WPC after a meeting on 14 November 2014. Source: Fieldwork.

The secretary gave a report that the *Mukando* scheme is a well-established scheme that helps to improve the livelihoods of people and that it was a worthwhile entrepreneurial activity for the WPC. He reported that the development of the *Mukando* constitution was one major requirement for ease running of the scheme. At the end of the meeting members present made contributions for the *Mukando* scheme and the writing of the *Mukando* constitution was postponed to a later date. A new issue that emerged during the course of the meeting was the introduction of the WPC to the ward councillor. The committee resolved that members should pay a visit to the ward councillor in order to introduce themselves.

WPC meeting: Friday 21 November 2014: The agenda of the meeting involved making *Mukando* contributions, coming up with a group name and plans to pay a visit to the councillor. Of the 15 members that were invited only seven, shown in Figure 12 (inclusive of the researcher) pitched up. These involved six males and one female.



Figure 12: WPC after a meeting on 21 November 2014. Source: fieldwork 2014.

Towards the close of the meeting *Mukando* contributions were made and writing of the *Mukando* constitution was postponed to a later date. It was agreed that a visit to the councillor was to be made by all members on 28 November. The peace committee was named: *Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding committee* (see Figure 13). The committee agreed to adopt the ECLF logo, shown on Figure 14 and this was to be their official logo which represented parent-child relationship between ECLF and Ward 8 peace committee.



Figure 13: Name of the WPC: Vimbainashe Matiti peacebuilding committee. Source: Fieldwork 2014.

The name *Vimbainashe* literally means keep trusting in the Lord and *Matiti* is the name of the ward popularly known as Ward 8. The WPC agreed that the name of the WPC shall always remain at the back of the tee shirt as shown above while the logo as shown below was to be reflected on the front side pocket.



Figure 14: Logo printed on all t/shirts. Source: Fieldwork 2014.

ECLF logo does not have the phrase ‘peacebuilding’ in between the logo and its motto. The WPC inserted the phrase ‘peacebuilding’ in-between the logo and the ECLF motto to show that peacebuilding was at the core of their business in Ward 8. In addition, since ECLF was built on Christian foundations, in pursuance to these Christian roots, the WPC affirmed this notion in their constitution that: “since the foundation of the WPC is rooted in Christian traditions, the chairperson of the WPC shall always remain a preserve for ministers of religion elected from amongst ministers of religion from the various Christian groups in Ward 8” (*section 4.1* of the Peacebuilding constitution).

WPC meeting: Friday 28 November 2014: The agenda of the meeting was to introduce the WPC to introduce itself to the ward councillor. In total, 11 members (inclusive of the researcher) of the peace committee, shown in Figure 15, paid a visit to the councillor’s homestead on 28 November.



Figure 15: WPC at the ward councillor’s home on 28 November 2014 after a meeting. Source: fieldwork 2014.

We arrived at the councillor's residence at 07:00. The peace committee chairperson could not attend this meeting due to other pressing issues; however, the meeting was chaired by the deputy chair Mrs 00013 and she was the one who introduced the WPC to the ward councillor. She also pointed out that the councillor was appointed as ex-officio member of the WPC in absentia. Further, she informed the councillor about the adoption of *Mukando* scheme as a peacebuilding mechanism. The acting chairperson highlighted that the WPC was aimed at building peace through income generating projects such as road-runner, beekeeping among other projects.

Subsequently, the acting chairperson gave time to the secretary to provide a brief background about ECLF and its entry into Ward 8 in 2013 and the CPMRT sensitization workshop leading to the formation of the WPC. In summation, the secretary explained his collaboration with the district focal person as part of his PhD field work. The secretary also showed the councillor letters, ethical clearance from UKZN and another from his supervisor which spelled out that his research involved setting up a peace committee in Seke (see Appendix 1 and 2). Further, the secretary explained that since his research involved working with a small advisory team, the WPC automatically became co-researchers from the day of appointment. He reiterated that he has pledged to buy tee shirts for the group to increase the visibility of the WPC as part of his contribution to making the WPC visible. The secretary handed over to the acting chairperson who gave time to the ward councillor to give a word.

The councillor accepted his co-option as ex-officio member of the peace committee. He also pledged that he was ready to work with the peace committee in the promotion of the peacebuilding programme in the ward. He also, pledged that he was going to introduce the WPC to the ward assembly. A ward assembly comprises of 29 village heads resident in Ward 8 of which the councillor is the chairperson. Further, the councillor urged the peace committee that they should come up with a strategic plan to visit all the villages in the ward. He also pointed out that from what he heard it appeared peacebuilding fell within the cluster of food security and nutrition in the ZIM ASSET (Zimbabwe agenda for sustainable socio-economic transformation), a government driven blueprint which runs from 2013 to 2018. He highlighted that food security was the decisive link between the WPC and development which is being driven by the WADCO and VIDCOs, which he chairs. He commended the peace committee to act as a unifier and a bridge between various conflicting groups and concluded that: "I am happy that this programme is being spearheaded by ministers of religion whom society considers as torch bearers of peace." In his words, he stressed that the WPC should endeavour to evaluate its activities first before getting to 2015 in order to determine whether they have made a positive impact after which a 2015 plan can be made. These words gave the peace committee a warm welcome to work in the ward councillor and the various stakeholders.

Before the meeting ended, members of the peace committee thanked the councillor for a warm welcome. Before the close of the meeting, members of the peace committee proposed to meet on 5 December at the usual venue. The meeting ended at 8:30 with a word of prayer.

WPC meeting: Friday 5 December 2014: The agenda was to promote cohesion; to write *Mukando* constitution and to review deliberations by the councillor especially to come up with modalities on how to conduct the self-evaluation since the year was heading towards the end. Since turn up was not satisfactory members who had turned up involved three males and three females and they agreed that they should postpone the writing of the *Mukando* scheme constitution to another date. Towards the end of the meeting, members made *Mukando* scheme contributions. Before the end of the meeting we agreed that the next meeting would be on 12 December 2014.

WPC meeting: Friday 19 December 2014: After receiving a note from the chairperson that the meeting on 12 December was not going to take off due to other pressing issues, I made efforts on 9 December to ensure that every member was informed that the meeting had been postponed to 19 December. On 19 December, the agenda involved writing *Mukando* and peacebuilding constitutions and to chart the way forward in preparation for self-evaluation. There were seven members comprising of four males and three females and they agreed that *Mukando* and peacebuilding could not be written when the majority of members were absent and thus, the writing of *Mukando* and peacebuilding constitutions were postponed to a later date. Towards the end of the meeting, the WPC members made *Mukando* scheme contributions. At the end, the committee agreed to task the secretary to draft an evaluation tool for self-evaluation. This decision was reached because all the members were now aware that the secretary was involved in research and they were his advisory team. I did not decline this offer but took up this responsibility. In fact, when the councillor proposed self-evaluation I was one of those individuals who were quick to secure a buy-in knowing ahead of time that I was still going to convince the advisory team to consider self-evaluation as a requirement in PAR, for the benefit of the WPC and lastly for purposes of fulfilling my PhD requirements. Before the end of the meeting, we agreed that with effect from first of January all meetings were to be convened at the end of the month. Members agreed that 27 December 2014 was the next date of meeting for purposes of writing *Mukando* constitution. The meeting was proposed to start at 14:00 hours.

WPC meeting: Friday 27 December 2014: The agenda of the meeting was to write *Mukando* constitution and to make *Mukando* scheme contributions. There were seven members comprising of three males and four females who participated in the writing of the *Mukando* constitution (see Appendix 11 for *Mukando*

constitution). Although all members of the WPC had not turned up, members present agreed to write *Mukando* constitution because the writing of this constitution was considered long overdue and therefore needed to be written on this date. Before the close of the meeting, members made *Mukando* scheme contributions. At this meeting, we agreed that a self-evaluation should be conducted and it was to focus on activities that took place between 7 November and 27 December 2014. The date for evaluation was set for 16 January 2015. The meeting started at 15:15 and ended at 17:29 hours.

Preparations for self-evaluation: 5 January 2015: On 19 December I was tasked with the responsibility to draft a self evaluation guide (see Appendix 3). In order to maintain a participatory approach, I started off by interviewing the chairperson of the peace committee in order to identify key areas that needed to be addressed in the self-evaluation. The discussion unfolded as follows:

Researcher: *The pilot peace committee was put in place on 7 November 2014 and it is now close to three months old. If we are to evaluate which areas do you think need self-evaluation?*

Chairperson: *We should start by looking at membership first that is by now we should be able to tell whether there are any drop-outs or not out of the participants we started the peace committee with. Again we should revisit our plan to see if the anticipated number needed to make up a peace committee was achieved or not? In my view, the number of participants that we started with is still stable. This shows that this peace committee is progressing.*

Researcher: *What should come next after a review on membership cluster?*

Chairperson: *A review of the revolving loan fund (Mukando scheme) should be next. Mukando is an achievement because it was born out of this peace committee and is still on-going and members of the peace committee are benefiting out of Mukando scheme.*

Researcher: *How about the regular attendance of some peace committees to sanctioned meetings. What can we learn out of it?*

Chairperson: *As from 7 November 2014 we have been conducting meetings every Friday except on 12 December and that is satisfactory enough. Generally, attendance in our meetings has been satisfactory and the quorum was not all that bad.*

Researcher: *What are some of the challenges that you have experienced between 7 November and 27 December 2014?*

Chairperson: *Appointment was the major challenge because I appointed individuals that I did not have full information about who they are. I just assumed that since they have been trained they will accept my appointment and that we will have a good working relationship. It is a challenge just to see someone and then you assign a huge responsibility to a person you do not have full information about.*

Researcher: *If appointment was by assumption, what are some of the potential risks associated with such an approach?*

Chairperson: *It is a risky in that your expectations may not come into fruition because some people may be having different interests.*

Researcher: *What is good about appointment?*

Chairperson: *Appointment gives power to the person who appoints. For example, in cases where appointees misbehave the person who appoints has the power to expel them out of the peace committee. Expelling villains helps to protect the life of the committee.*

Researcher: *In the context of peacebuilding do you think expelling a peace committee member is possible and under what circumstances can that happen?*

Chairperson: *Expelling someone can happen if one is the chairperson. In every committee there is the chair, deputy, secretary and treasurer these office bearers report to the chairperson. So by virtue of his/her position the chairperson can expel a misbehaving member. Expulsion should not be done out of hatred and bitterness but should be done only for purposes of achieving the aim of the programme. This is what makes appointment an important mechanism? Unless, if the chairperson is not a good person who is hungry for power then expulsion becomes a problem but if the chair is someone who is committed to achieving the aim of the initiative, expulsion is not a bad thing.*

Researcher: *What would you recommend as an alternative to appointment?*

Chairperson: *Working without a structure can help one to closely monitor people before they are given positions because when I appointed people into positions some individuals I appointed were recommended by their peers. Because you cannot know everyone, I ended up saying give me names of those whom you know and I personally did not know some of them and that is a challenge to work with people you do not know. It means that while you monitor the person you know you have the responsibility to monitor even those that were recommended by their peers. What complicates the whole thing is that you do not know the interests of those you assign to recommend other people.*

Researcher: *What is the other challenge?*

Chairperson: *Commitment is another. Some people are not committed. In my view, had it not been that Mukando came out of this peace committee there is greater possibility that some people were not going to come as they did on every Friday from 7 November to 27 December 2014. The majority of members came for the peace committee because of what they benefitted out of this peace committee. This is what made them to commit themselves?*

Researcher: *Ok. I thought that people were coming because they had been trained in peace issues as a result they were feeling some kind of an obligation to build peace. Isn't that so Mr. Chairperson?*

Chairperson: *Yes, training was good but it is not the major motivating factor for people to come for the peace committee. Most people saw that there was something that they were benefiting out of this peace committee. Mukando scheme is helping all of us in that we share resources because of that those meetings became obligatory for every interested member. Also, because of Mukando scheme you can actually see that some people are clamouring for an increase to individual subscriptions. For that reason, people are now working hard because their livelihoods are being enhanced through Mukando scheme.*

Researcher: *What are some of the challenges that you experienced during the period under review?*

Chairperson: *One challenge is that of age-groups in our peace committee. Our peace committee comprises of elderly people ranging from 40 years and above only and that is both a challenge and an advantage. It is a disadvantage in that there are no young people in the peace committee and the advantage is whenever people see elderly people they believe that this peace committee is worth the effort.*

Researcher: *Since this peace committee is comprised of elderly people how are you going to address this challenge?*

Chairperson: *Since the required number in each peace committee is still low we will co-opt young people as representatives of those sectors that are currently not represented.*

Researcher: *In literature we hear that peace committees are temporary structures. What do you say about this?*

Chairperson: *Generations and generations require peace so there is no point at which we can say we have achieved enough peace in Ward 8. We will continue to have more and more people on earth and this suggests that peace initiatives should be on-going.*

Researcher: *When you hear people saying that peace committees are temporary structures what do you think they will be talking about?*

Chairperson: *I just think that this is only an assumption that after sensitizing a community with information related to peace we assume that those communities are now conversant with peace issues, this is often not the case because people have different perceptions. Issues to do with peace require continuous efforts over and over again. So if we say peace committee is temporary, it is temporary on what grounds?*

Researcher: *In other words, are you seeing this peace committee will outlive us?*

Chairperson: *Definitely, the peace committee will outlive us. This is why you see Mukando scheme is still on-going.*

Researcher: *Do you see a connection between Mukando scheme and peacebuilding?*

Chairperson: *Mukando scheme is peacebuilding by another name. Truly speaking what makes a person to have peace is when someone has shelter, food, clothing and other basic necessities. Once an individual has these things s/he will automatically have peace. What makes other people to steal is because there will be no means for survival. In real life, if you need something and it's readily available then you will have peace.*

Researcher: *Regarding the procedures for the creation of the peace committee what lessons can you say you have learnt?*

Chairperson: *I have learnt that when you identify would-be peace committee members one should make thorough investigations in order to understand each individual. A thorough investigation of individual personalities will help to set up something durable.*

Researcher: *Among the few people that I interviewed outside the peace committee, some indicated that when setting up peace committees the councillor should be the gatekeeper. In Ward 8 the councillor was not the gatekeeper what would you say considering these two scenarios?*

Chairperson: *Our peace committee is not abnormal in any way because we are already working hand in-glove with the ward councillor. The difference between our peace committee and the ones you spoke about is that during CPMRT the councillor was the gatekeeper. So after training we could not go back to the councillor because he already knew from the start that there was a peacebuilding training programme so our responsibility was to invite him to the information meeting which he did not manage to come. In 2013, all stakeholders who include the councillor, police and other stakeholders were invited. So we cannot say councillor did not know. In fact by the time CPMRT training was conducted the Ward 8 councillor was MDC and now we have a ZANU PF councilor.*

After interviewing the chairperson of the WPC, I had an informal conversation with the deputy of the peace committee and I was able to pick up some themes which focused on how the WPC was created, challenges faced by the WPC and strengths in the WPC and the results it produced during the period under review. I compiled a set of questions along these thematic areas and added the question of how members of the WPC understood the concept of a peace committee. We reviewed these questions together with the district focal person on 14 January in preparation for the self-evaluation on 16 January 2015.

14 January 2015: I arrived at Pastor 00010's residence to review questions that I identified as a result of my interactions with him and the deputy chair and some insights gained from minutes of previous meetings. This was a preparatory phase for self-evaluation meeting scheduled for 16 January 2015. I presented to him the proposed questions for discussion. I had suggested a set of six questions but when we discussed we ended up with five set of questions. I had this sample of questions typed and printed on paper for ease of reading. We went through each draft question after which we made an agreement that all the five questions were to be used as a guide. The questions were to be written in Shona language and the chairperson was to facilitate the self-evaluation (see Appendix 3 for self-evaluation guide).

WPC self evaluation meeting: Friday 16 January 2015: The agenda of the meeting was to conduct a self-evaluation of events that took place between 7 November and 27 December 2014. The secretary was tasked with the responsibility to type all the deliberations and present them to the peace committee on 30 January. Of the 15 members 10 (inclusive of two others), shown on Figure 16, pitched up for evaluation.



Figure 16: WPC after the evaluation session on 16 January 2015. Source: fieldwork 2015.

Proceedings of the self-evaluation are described in detail in the subsequent section (6.5). By the close of the meeting, members agreed that results of the self-evaluation were to be presented to the peace committee by the secretary on 30 January 2015. Analysis of results by the PAG were to be made following the presentation of results on the same day.

6.5 Background to self-evaluation.

As mentioned above, from 7 November to 27 December, WPC meetings were conducted on a weekly basis. These regular meetings gave participants increased confidence in themselves and the peace committee initiative. Nevertheless, some committee members did not regularly attend meetings. For example, of the 10 would-be peace committee members that were invited to the information meeting on 7 November 2014, only six members turned up. On Friday 14 November 2014, only nine members attended the meeting.

Subsequently, on Friday 21 November 2014, seven members attended. On 28 November 2014, 11 members attended. On Friday 5 December 2014, six turned up. A resolution to conduct a meeting on Friday 12 December was made but the meeting was later postponed to Friday 19 December 2014 and seven members turned up. On Friday 19 December 2014, seven members attended the meeting and resolved that a self-evaluation should focus on activities from 7 November 2014 to 27 December 2014. It was against this background that a self-evaluation involving activities of the WPC was carried out on 16 January 2015.

Proceedings of the self-evaluation: The evaluation process was facilitated by the chairperson of the WPC and I, as the secretary, was writing deliberations of the self-evaluation and as well as voice-recording the proceedings. During the process, I was at liberty to ask participants to repeat, clarify statements and words that I could not understand and to do member checking to ensure that I had a correct record of agreed resolutions. Also, since I was tasked by the peace committee to present the results of the group discussions on 30 January 2015, I was careful to record the deliberation of the self-evaluation. In order to capture all the data, I complemented voice recording with note-taking so that I could reconcile notes with voices recorded. The results of the evaluation were to be used as a guide for all the activities in 2015.

From the point of view of the WPC in Ward 8, the setting up of a peace committee was aimed at putting an I4P in place. For me, the aim was “to test the scientific potential of PAR” (Santos, 1991, p.31) from the date the peace committee was appointed to the date when I conducted evaluation on 22 July 2015. Although the period is short in terms of the number of months that the WPC was established, the PAG

took upon itself to analyse procedures and strategies that were used for setting up a peace committee in Ward 8 and to ascertain the extent to which the peace committee has benefited out of its activities. Since the PAG was the service provider, designer and implementer of the peace initiative it was vitally important for them to test the initiative themselves first before taking it to villages in Ward 8.

At the close of the self-evaluation, the PAG gave recommendations to determine the future of the WPC and procedures for the creation of VPCs in Seke district. Given that this peace committee was a pilot initiative, it can be safely concluded that cycles of the PAR were applied by the PAG and the self-evaluation completed the first cycle of the PAR. The sectors represented in the peace committee especially those that came for evaluation includes security forces, religion, traditional leadership, business, ordinary people and health. The Table below indicates the demographic characteristics of WPC members that turned up for self-evaluation on 16 January. The evaluation session was conducted at the usual meeting place, at the AFM in Zimbabwe church, at Ziko business centre. The results, analysis and recommendations that came out of the self-evaluation are documented in Chapter Seven.

Table 16: Composition of WPC who participated in the self-evaluation

Number	Composition	Age Group	Sex	Language
1(n=1)	Village head	Late 50s	Female	Zezuru
2(n=1)	Defence forces	Early 50s	Male	Zezuru
3(n=1)	Community health worker	Mid 40s	Female	Manyika
4(n=2)	Subsistence farmer	Early 60s	Female	Zezuru
	Subsistence farmer	Late 40s	Female	Kore-kore
5(n=2)	Minister of religion	Mid 40s	Male	Manyika
	Minister of religion	Mid 50s	Male	Zezuru
6(n=1)	Traditional healer	Early 70s	Female	Zezuru
7(n=1)	Business forum	Late 40s	Male	Manyika
8(n=1)	Researcher	Mid 40s	Male	Karanga
N=10				

Source: Fieldwork 2015

Before the close of the self-evaluation, the committee agreed that 30 January was going to be the next date of meeting in order to analyse the results of the self-evaluation (see Appendix 3).

WPC meeting: Friday 30 January 2015: The agenda was the presentation of results of the self-evaluation conducted on 16 January 2015 to the PAG, to analyse results of the self-evaluation and to

propose a blueprint for the concept of peacebuilding in preparation for village sensitization tours. The strategic plan involved village sensitization tours to all 29 villages. As shown in Table 16 above, 10 peace committee members who attended included five males and five females. After the presentation of results, members made *Mukando* scheme contributions. After analysis of the results the WPC came up with a peacebuilding blueprint.

6.6 Peacebuilding blueprint: 30 January 2015

A conceptual shift in understanding peacebuilding occurred at a meeting convened on 30 January 2015 after I had given a report on the findings from the inter-WPC meeting in Wedza district involving six wards. The PAG was open to discuss the findings on how other WPCs understood peacebuilding by linking peace with development. As a result of the direct impact of the findings from the Wedza district inter-WPC meeting, the PAG unanimously integrated peacebuilding with community development projects on 30 January 2015. This conceptual shift brought about an understanding of peacebuilding along four aspects:

- Building of relationships;
- Promoting peace;
- Development initiatives; and
- Capacity building

This comprehensive blueprint for peacebuilding was developed as a result of discussions and reflections on the findings from Wedza district inter-WPC meeting. In other words, the findings from the inter-WPC meeting on 17 January 2015, gave Ward 8 PAG the conceptual strength to begin to perceive peacebuilding as involving the four elements (details on each of the four aspects on peacebuilding blueprint are in Chapter Seven).

Collaborative relationship between the WPC and ward 8 councillor: By 30 January, the time the PAG made a collaborative relationship with the ward councillor, the councillor had already made plans to introduce the peacebuilding committee to the ward assembly. A ward assembly comprises of all village heads and different stakeholders in a ward. For example, at a monthly peace committee meeting on 30 January 2015, the ward councillor made the following remarks to demonstrate his collaborative relationship with the WPC and interests to introduce the WPC to the ward assembly:

I am happy that you have now evaluated your activities and I look forward to introducing you to the villagers. I have welcomed you with both hands when you came talking about peacebuilding. So I am now going to put you in the ward strategic plan, this is the main reason why I came here today to inform you ahead of time that we are hoping to have a ward assembly comprising of all the 29 village heads in Ward 8 on 3 February. On this meeting, we are setting up a schedule for village tours. In these tours I will be spelling out Manyame Rural district council's strategic plan and all stakeholders shall be slotted in to deliver their major activities. As I have already observed, peacebuilding has some commonalities with ZIM ASSET in that the projects you are

targeting have a strong bearing on the food security cluster. So you will be slotted together with other stakeholders such as Ward assembly, Child protection unit, Population services and others. We want to make sure that in every village that we are going to visit we will make them to understand what we are doing and how we can partner with them in building peace. I will give you the opportunity to tell the ward assembly what peacebuilding is all about and it is important that you avoid that which is not of value. Remember the first cut is the deepest. By this I mean that you must present those programmes that touches the lives of people, those that benefit individuals and groups for example when you mentioned road-runner project I was touched when you said if people can form groups and donate road-runner chickens each road-runner costs US\$10 meaning if we get 200 road-runner chickens we can raise US\$2,000 that is a good project which most people do not usually think of. So this has touched me that people do not know that they already have resources at their disposal because most people have road-runner chickens in their villages. But it's how we are going to express ourselves to convince people that matters.

The above sentiments indicate buy-in from the councillor to collaborate with the WPC on 28 November 2014 and on 30 January 2015 respectively. It is important to note that the ward councillor linked peacebuilding activities with ZIM ASSET. In the five clusters outlined in this blueprint, it is, *food security and nutrition cluster* and *social services and poverty eradication cluster*, which are directly linked to the core of peacebuilding as understood by the ward councillor and the WPC. Food and security cluster seeks to “create a self-sufficient and food surplus economy...” (GoZ, 2013 p.50). The social services and poverty eradication cluster is aimed at “improving the living standards of the citizens...” (ibid., p.61). Food production and eradication of poverty are critical for peacebuilding. During the information meeting on 7 November 2014, availability of food was mentioned by the newly appointed WPC as one of the key aspect of peacebuilding. Hence, the link between peacebuilding and ZIM ASSET blueprint.

As mentioned already, the WPC was to be inducted on 3 February 2015 by the councillor. The aim of the induction to the ward assembly was to secure buy-in from the ward assembly after which the WPC was going to participate in the on-coming sensitization tour to all the 29 villages. Before the close of the meeting, the date of next meeting was scheduled at 28 February 2015. Dates for village tours were to be determined by the councillor. This meeting started at 09:30 and ended at 13:20 hours.

6.6.1 Factors to a conceptual shift in understanding peacebuilding by the WPC

This section chronicles events believed by this researcher to have influenced a conceptual shift in understanding peacebuilding by the PAG. The major one was the inter-WPC visit in which the secretary of the peace committee and the chairperson participated and gave report back on findings.

6.6.2 Visit to Wedza district on 17 January 2015

On 17 January 2015, a day after self-evaluation, we were invited to attend a LPC meeting at Wedza growth point, Wedza district in Mashonaland east province. The meeting was called by the parent

organization, ECLF through the programmes and training manager of Zimbabwe. This meeting involved eight different WPCs. Two were from Seke, Ward 8 and 13; one from Marondera district, and five from Wedza district. Only two WPC members from each WPC were invited to attend this meeting. In Ward 8 of Seke, attendees involved the district focal person; the WPC chairperson and Mr. Chivasa, as the secretary.

The highlights of this meeting were that WPC representatives shared their experiences of how each peace committee was formed, the activities that they were currently doing, general progress and future plans. It was out of these shared experiences that I was triggered on the importance of individual narratives on procedures for putting in place informal peace committees at local community levels. After the meeting I requested some members of the peace committees from Marondera and Wedza to narrate their stories on their experiences of informal peace committees (a detailed presentation on experiences of peace committees at village levels are presented in Chapter Seven). Out of these stories that were told it came out clearly that peacebuilding was linked to development initiatives. For example, there was emphasis at this inter-WPC meeting that: “there is no development without peace and development without peace is not sustainable.”

Another highlight of this meeting was that in Wedza district, a WPC known as Mubaiwa ward had written a six-page peacebuilding constitution which they presented to us all. All the participants had the opportunity to have a look at the constitution which was greatly applauded by almost everyone. I had the opportunity to read it through and scanned it as there was room for anyone to request for a browse through. In the preamble, the peacebuilding constitution reads: *Prevailing disputes or conflict in the community are on the rise. Therefore a need to intervene and restore peace was observed as a measure to maintain development in society.* This preamble reflected the schema that peace is a precondition for development and it also suggests a conceptual framework that peacebuilding and development are not opposites but that they complement each other.

During this meeting, the programmes and training manager presented a talk entitled: *sustainable livelihoods*. In this talk, he gave examples of how other WPCs in Chivi district of Masvingo province, Nkai district WPCs in Matabeleland province and Mudzi district WPCs in Mashonaland east provinces were building peace through the improvements of livelihoods. Further, he emphasized that the WPCs in Chivi district were involved in the following projects:

- They were running poultry projects;
- They had established village banks where community members borrow and payback;
- They were running goat projects;

- They were assisting orphaned children with payment of school fees and the provision of stationary;
- They were involved in repairing roads, boreholes;
- They had built a crèche;
- They were involved in organizing various religious groups for prayers for rains;
- They were teaching conservation farming; among other activities

At the height of this talk, the programmes and training manager emphasized that during the 2013 general election, electoral violence decreased owing to peacebuilding activities that were run by WPC in Chivi district. On the basis of this inter-WPC interaction in Wedza two important developments emerged for ward 8 peace committee of Seke district: firstly, a conceptual shift in understanding peacebuilding and secondly, the urgent need for village sensitisation which incubated into five VPCs (see procedures for setting up VPCs below).

Subsequently, a series of meetings conducted by the WPC and the ultimate self-evaluation of activities that took place between 7 November and 27 December 2014 marked the end of the first cycle of the PAR when the PAG devised a new plan for the setting up of VPCs. The setting up of VPCs involved planning, implementation of plans and evaluation which was made on 22 July 2015 for purposes of this study. Thus, these preceding events led the PAG into a second cycle of PAR.

Phase 5: Re-planning and implementation: the second cycle of the PAR

This section focuses on procedures that were involved in setting up VPCs. After drawing a number of lessons from the self-evaluation on 30 January 2015, the creation of VPCs was a culmination of the lessons learnt and that explains why it was considered the second cycle of the PAR.

The planning stage was conducted prior to the village sensitization tours starting 30 January 2015. When the PAG came up with a blueprint for the concept of peacebuilding for use during sensitization tours that was an attempt to put plans on the ground in order to implement (see background to the formation of the VPCs, section 6.7.1).

6.7 Procedures used for setting up VPCs

This section describes steps that led to the establishment of VPCs in Marimbi, Chikambi and Chanakira villages in Ward 8. These were the first three VPCs to be established by the WPC in ward 8.

6.7.1 Background to the formation of VPCs

Following the self-evaluation meeting on 16 January 2015, Ward 8 peacebuilding committee convened a meeting on 30 January for purposes of reflection, discussion and validation of recommendations made

during self-evaluation. During this meeting the PAG was encouraged to openly discuss the results of the self-evaluation and to validate recommendations. The major recommendations made centred on:

- Crafting a peacebuilding constitution;
- Developing a blueprint for the concept of peacebuilding;
- Restructuring of a WPC into executive committee and projects team;
- Capacity building workshop for WPC; and
- Setting up of VPCs in all 29 villages in Ward 8

These recommendations indicate a notable shift from the initial overall objective of the study to put in place a WPC, for the overall objective now was to set up VPCs in all the 29 villages in Ward 8. This shift could be attributed to a number of factors. The major ones could be the wide consultations by co-researchers involving the district and provincial focal persons, the inter-WPC meeting in Wedza district and the results of the self evaluation conducted on 16 January and the subsequent analysis of results on 30 January 2015. Taken together, these factors could probably have exerted their influence leading to a shift in the overall objective of the study. It was against this background that a plan to set up VPCs was made and put into fruition through the village sensitization tours. As mentioned already, another important development was the conceptual development of peacebuilding as understood by PAG and this blueprint was used to help communities to understand the concept of peacebuilding.

Owing to the meeting on 30 January 2015, the PAG and the ward 8 councillor made a collaborative relationship in which the WPC was given a nod to get involved in the village tour with other stakeholders in all the 29 villages in Ward 8. The village tour was a platform that gave the WPC an opportunity to sensitize every village on peacebuilding activities with a view to secure buy-in from each village. Once buy-in was secured each village head was to be tasked with the responsibility to put in place a VPC. On a broader framework, it is important to highlight that by this time in 2015, peacebuilding had now become an important aspect of the Zimbabwe government's blueprint called NPRC which focuses on issues of reconciliation and healing at community levels as discussed already in Chapter Three.

6.7.2 Induction of the WPC to the ward assembly: 3 February 2015

Subsequently, the WPC was introduced to the ward assembly on 3 February 2015. The ward assembly meeting comprised of 29 village heads, the ward councillor, the ward coordinator, plus the five members of the WPC and 10 other stakeholders in the ward giving a total of 46 people. In terms of gender characteristics there were five women and 41 men. The meeting was chaired by the ward councillor. During introductions the councillor took the opportunity to notify the august house that there was a new stakeholder whose programme involved peacebuilding in the villages. There were two stakeholders that were introduced on 3 February: the WPC and Shamwari yemwanasikana. The ward councillor gave each of the two stakeholders five minutes to introduce themselves and to highlight in brief their core business

and activities. The WPC gave the secretary, Mr. N. Chivasa, the responsibility to introduce the committee and to highlight the core business and activities of the WPC in Ward 8.

After giving due respect to the chief in absentia (as is the custom), the secretary thanked all the village heads and the councillor and went on to explain the concept of peacebuilding as a four-legged pot involving: building of relationships; promoting peaceful co-existence; promotion of development and capacity building (I reproduced the basic four elements conceptualized on 30 January by the PAG).

The secretary proceeded to give a brief background to the birth of the WPC by linking it to ECLF. He highlighted that ECLF is a church-based organisation whose thrust is to promote forgiveness, reconciliation, peaceful co-existence, non-violent resolution of conflicts and the improvement of livelihoods at village levels. Further, he pointed out that ECLF conducted a CPMRT sensitisation workshop in 2013 which was meant to sensitize Ward 8 on the reality of conflict, differences between individuals and groups and how people should accommodate each other and live peacefully. Further, he said that, after about 16 months an evaluation was made by ECLF and out of this evaluation a resolution to set up a WPC was made and this resolution was realized on 7 November 2014 when the WPC was put in place. The secretary emphasized that this WPC was a result of consensus that was reached by trained participants in ward 8 to set up a peace committee whose responsibility involves the promotion of cordial relationships, peaceful co-existence, development and the improvement of livelihoods. He also reiterated that this peace committee does not work alone but compliments and teams up with VIDCOs and WADCOs and the ward assembly in its endeavour to build peace in Ward 8.

The secretary then introduced the 15-member WPC and emphasized that their core business was to promote peace. In order to illustrate that peace requires concerted efforts by groups, the secretary illustrated the concept of peace and how people should work together to achieve peace using one of the popular Shona folk story: *The hare and other animals* (see Appendix 8). In order to link the peace committee and the promotion of peace, the secretary emphasized that in this folk story, peace is like a community well out of which every animal needs water for survival. He highlighted that as is often the case with every individual that we all cannot survive without water it is the same with peace. He said that people cannot survive without peaceful co-existence, without forgiving each other, without reconciling and without experiencing conflict and hence the need to come up with methods to address conflict without the use of violence which he explained as physical fighting and arson.

Further on, the secretary highlighted that in the folk story we have seen that animals convened a meeting in order to discuss how they were planning to address the problem of water scarcity and this is akin to people who must work together in order to address peace challenges affecting their communities. He pointed out that from the folk story we saw that in every community there are always villains signifying those people that have the propensity to violate the norms as was the case with Mr. Hare who refused to cooperate in the digging of the well with other animals although he wanted to drink from the same well. The secretary made it clear that in communities we will always have such people and emphasized that one way to maintain peace as was illustrated in the folk story was for members of the community to work in unison to address any emerging challenge.

In addition, he emphasized that the dissenting Mr Hare is a classic example that in community we will always have differing perceptions, ways of thinking and interests and therefore, the secretary pointed out that we must not fight over our differences but we must come together in order to find common ground so that we learn to co-exist as members of the community sharing the same resources and space.

Further, the secretary reported that as the story illustrates, Mr Hare outwitted those animals that were guarding the well and did mischievous deeds in the well. Mischief by Mr Hare was an indication that if people's differences are not addressed conflict can drive people into becoming antagonists and ultimately they can kill each other. However, the secretary stressed that although Mr Hare appeared to have prevailed at last he was caught because all the other animals that worked as a group had a number of expertise, talents and skills at their disposal and this indicates that communities members must come together and make use of every individual members' talent, skill and expertise if peace is to be restored and maintained.

The secretary reiterated that in order to have peace people must come together, work together to address challenges affecting their community. He went on to say that, the WPC is like people that are guarding a well and their responsibility is to help to promote peace by means of sensitizing communities, encouraging people to forgive each other, reconcile and to address conflict amicably. He also commended that for a place to experience development and the improvement of livelihoods there is need to have duty-bearers and the WPC is a classic example of duty bearers for peace. The secretary emphasized that the WPC cannot all do everything at the same time while village heads are giving people pieces of land and other responsibilities, the peace committee is mainly for the promotion of peaceful co-existence, forgiveness, reconciliation, promoting income generating projects and non-violent resolution of conflicts. In closing he said, peace concerns everyone and therefore we must work as a team in order to live in

peace. After saying this he thanked the councillor for the time to speak to the ward assembly. There was a round of applause from the floor!

As a result of this induction, it appeared that the WPC was beginning to make inroads into the community through the ward assembly. After receiving buy-in from the ward assembly to work with the WPC as one of the stakeholder in Ward 8, the PAG prepared itself to get involved in the planned village sensitization tours involving all stakeholders in the ward.

6.8 Village sensitization tours

As mentioned, the schema for peacebuilding developed on 30 January 2015 by the PAG became a blueprint that was disseminated to communities in Ward 8 beginning with the ward assembly and the village tour. On 30 January, the PAG was advised by the ward councillor that they were going to be slotted in 10 minutes to share their primary goals and activities during village sensitization tours. The village tour was spearheaded by the ward councillor and interested stakeholders and for the PAG this was an opportunity to make in-roads into communities. This village tours took place on 10, 17 February and ended on 24 February 2015. The first **tour conducted** on 10 February started at 10 and ended at 15:15 hours (see details in the Table 17).

Table 17: First round village sensitisation tour on 10 February 2015

Village(s) toured	Estimated number of people attended	Time spent	Venue
Chanakira	85 [men & women]	10:34-11:35am [1 hr 1 min]	Chanakira
Mundoga; Mazuru; & Chimbindi	60 [men & women]	11:46-13:29pm [1 hr 43 mins]	Mutiti
Chikambi	53 [men & women]	14:03-15:14pm [1 hr 11mins]	Chikambi

Source: Fieldwork

The second tour took place on 17 February and it started at 10:00 and ended at 11:45 in the morning (see details in Table 18). Other villages that were scheduled could not be reached as there was a funeral. Thus, the councillor rescheduled the tour to 24 February.

Table 18: Second round village sensitization tour on 17 February 2015

Village(s) toured	Estimated number of people attended	Time spent	Venue
Marimbi	84 [men & women]	10:30-11:43am [1 hr 13 mins]	Jonas Sec. School

Source: Fieldwork

The third tour took place on 24 February and it started at 11:00 and ended at 16:10 hours (see details in Table 19).

Table 19: Third round village sensitization tour on 24 February 2015

Village(s) toured	Estimated number of people attended	Time spent	Venue
Magodhi; Tapera; Mujoma; & Seve	55 [men & women]	11:35-13:18 pm [1 hr 17 mins]	Bush buck
Matambo; Musonza & Chakaza	28 [men & women]	13:33-14:27 pm [54 mins]	Ward centre
Matambanadzo; Mazhindu & Jenami	33 [men & women]	14:42-16:08 pm [1 hr 26mins]	Musasa

Source: Fieldwork

During the tour, the WPC presented to villagers what peacebuilding entails and to sensitise communities to put in place village communities. The purpose of setting up VPCs was to spearhead and sustaining peacebuilding activities at village level. Village heads were tasked with the responsibility to put in place a seven member peace committee comprising of both males and females.

Ward 8 stakeholders that participated in village sensitization: Stakeholders in Ward 8 who participated in the tour include the WADCO chairperson; WADCO secretary; Family Support Trust; Shamwari yemwasikana (the girl's colleague); Women's Affairs; Ministry of Youth; ZRP and the WPC. The WDCO represented by the councillor spelled out plans by Manyame rural district council, which involved refurbishing classroom blocks for two primary schools namely, Kudyarawanza and Jonasi primary schools in the next three years up to 2018. The councillor emphasized that the refurbishment of classroom blocks was an attempt to embrace the ZIM ASSET blue print. Another stakeholder that participated was Family Support Trust. Family Support Trust sensitized local communities on issues among other things, involving taking care orphaned children and the general welfare of families in the home setting and community at large. In addition, Shamwari yemwasikana informed villagers of the rights of the girl

child from zero to 18 years of age. Its major core activities involved helping the girl child access education and in cases where the girl child has been raped to assist her in getting health facilities and redress through the courts. Women's affairs represented by the ward 8 coordinator sensitized villagers to produce their own food, engage in income generating projects such as piggery, small livestock's such as rabbits and poultry.

Apart from that, Women's affairs encouraged women and men to participate in community level agricultural shows facilitated by agricultural extension officers during community agricultural produce exhibition. Women's affairs emphasized that those with the best produce are given prizes at the show by judges who are mainly agricultural extension officers and ward coordinators. Thus, villages were encouraged to participate in agricultural shows. Overall, everyone was encouraged to work with their own hands to produce food for their homes and the community at large.

Another stakeholder, the Ministry of youth focused on young people between the ages of 16 and 35. Their thrust involved encouraging young people to work in groups and register their groups in anticipation to get project funds from the government. In addition, Ministry of youth also advised all village heads to create a data base for all young people and to send the information to Seke district office. The ZRP represented by a neighbourhood watch police officer sensitized communities on the various types of crimes that are committed by offenders in different villages in ward 8. The ZRP warned local communities to be on the look-out for people who just loiter around in the villages. He also advised local communities that rape and domestic violence were on the increase and therefore local communities were warned to address their differences through local conflict resolution structures instead of fighting as it often result in the perpetrator or victim being harmed or risk losing their lives.

The WPC represented by the researcher and secretary presented peacebuilding as a four legged pot. In his presentation, the thrust was to secure buy-in from villages to set up VPCs comprising of seven members. The secretary of the WPC highlighted some of the projects that VPCs were expected to embark on in their villages included but not limited to; bee keeping; poultry; potatoes; horticulture; vegetable drying; fishpond; piggery; or peanut butter making. The thrust of the WPC was that villages should work in groups and the VPCs were to serve as a conduit to ensure that peace is promoted and sustained at village level.

Peacebuilding contributions by stakeholders in ward 8: From the presentations by each stakeholder I was able to pick the various contributions made by various stakeholders in ward 8 to peacebuilding. For example, the promotion of unity at family level and reintegration of orphans by Family Support Trust, the focus on empowering the girl child by Shamwari yemwanaskinan, the encouragement to every individual to work with their own hands to sustain their families by Women's affairs, the urge to promote young people to realize their dreams by the Ministry of youth, and the warning for community members to practice mutual policing by the ZRP were all pointing to one thing that is the well-fare of people in the community. For the WPC obviously peacebuilding was their key result area and after sharing space with other stakeholders in the ward there was need to look for common ground with other stakeholders in order to enhance peacebuilding activities as a team rather than just the WPC alone. These presentation by ward 8 stakeholders were attempts to address peace challenges affecting communities, thus, enhancing peacebuilding at village level.

Overall, after these sensitization tours, five VPCs were put in place. However, for purposes of this study only the first three were sampled by the PAG in order to find out peacebuilding activities in each of the three villages (details are discussed below).

6.8.1 Peace committee meeting: Friday 4 March 2015.

On 30 January the WPC made a proposal to conduct the next meeting on 28 February. However, due to circumstances beyond their control the meeting scheduled for 28 February was postponed to 4 March. The agenda for the meeting on 4 March involved reflections on the village sensitization tours conducted between 10, 17 and 24 February 2015 and a post-mortem of the capacity building workshop conducted by ECLF between 13 and 14 February. At this meeting *Mukando* scheme contributions were to be made. Also, plans for writing of the peacebuilding constitution were to be made at this meeting.

At a meeting, the WPC applauded themselves for being able to out-reach to 16 different villages during a tour with the councillor and other ward stakeholders. For the WPC, the thrust of the presentation was to sensitize village heads and the village assemblies to consider setting up VPCs comprising of seven members. In addition, there was a review of capacity building workshop on 13 and 14 February in which they acknowledged the link between peacebuilding and income-generating projects. Further, the WPC acknowledged that the core elements of peacebuilding were relationship building through dialoguing and the improvements of livelihoods.

On the review of village tours, the secretary reported that about five village peace committee were now in place, the committee agreed to make a commitment to conduct a support visit to the first three VPCs namely; Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi. Since the setting up of VPCs was a result of collaborative work between the researcher and the PAG, the data collected which focused on the types of projects, individual skills and knowledge on conflict resolution and the associations they belonged in each VPC, this became important data for the current study. The criterion used for selecting Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi was that these three were the first VPCs created in the ward following the village sensitization tours.

Before the close of the meeting, the committee agreed that writing the constitution was to be postponed to a later date because there was not enough time as much time was spent on reviewing the sensitization tours. In that regard, the committee tasked the secretary to draft a data form to be used as a group interview guide. I drafted a data form along the three areas proposed during the meeting. The data form was to be filled by WPC members and VPCs during the support visit tour. To that effect, five members were tasked with the responsibility to accompany the secretary for the support visits which were to be conducted on Friday 13 March. The committee agreed that the date of next meeting was to be on 31st March during which the committee was going to reflect on support visits to VPCs made to Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi villages.

6.8.2 Peace committee meeting: Friday 31 March 2015

The agenda of this meeting was to review support visits to three VPCs namely Chikambi, Chanakira and Marimbi, to make *Mukando* scheme contributions and propose a date for the writing of the peacebuilding constitution. Peace committee members that attended this meeting involved four females and four males. The five team members were: secretary, Mr Chivasa; Deputy WPC Chair, Mrs 00013; WPC Committee Members, Mrs 00016 and Mr 00015. The visiting team was expected to gather the following information:

Of the VPCs,

1. to know what project each member was doing as an individual or as a group
2. the knowledge and skills that each person had on conflict resolution
3. The associations that each individual was a member and those that are found in the village and the major aims of each association (see Appendix 14, for data form).

This set of questions were meant to provide the PAG with information on the types of projects in each village, conflict resolution skills at their disposal and the various associations in each village and their overall goals. Getting to know this information was considered a vital starting point for the WPC to partner with VPCs in peacebuilding activities in the ward.

Report on VPCs support visits: Friday 13 March 2015: Following the committee meeting at the AFM in Zimbabwe church at Chirasavana Business Centre on 4 March 2015, it was agreed that the Secretary, the WPC deputy chairperson and three other committee members should visit Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi VPCs. Other VPCs were to be visited after the WPC delegates were done with these three first.

Marimbi VPC support visit: The purpose of visiting the Marimbi VPC was to know what projects were being done in the village, and the knowledge and skills of the VPC members in running projects. Accordingly, we met with the Marimbi VPC members, shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Demographic characteristics for Marimbi VPC

Number	Composition	Age group	Sex	Level of Edu.	Language
1(n=4)	Entrepreneur	73	Female	Standard 6	Zezuru
	Entrepreneur	68	Male	Standard 6	Zulu
	Entrepreneur	53	Female	Junior certificate	Zezuru
	Entrepreneur	38	Female	Ordinary level	Zezuru
1(n=1)	Neighbourhood watch	61	Male	Standard 6	Zezuru
1(n=1)	Community worker	40	Female	Ordinary level	Ndau
N=6					

Source: Fieldwork

Although this VPC has seven members on the day of the visit we met with six member (four women and two men), shown in Table 20. Details on peacebuilding activities in Marimbi village are in Chapter Seven.

Chikambi VPC support visit: the aim of the support visit to Chikambi village was to get to know what is happening there with respect to projects, knowledge of projects among members of the local VPC and their conflict resolution skills. Chikambi village was the first to set up a VPC amongst all the 16 villages in the ward. Although there were seven members altogether in the Chikambi VPC, on the day of the support visit there were five of members only (three women and two men), shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Demographic characteristics for Chikambi VPC

Number	Composition	Age group	Sex	Level of edu.	Language
1(n=4)	Subsistent farmer	59	Female	Standard 5	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	55	Male	Junior certificate	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	53	Female	Grade 7	Zezuru
	Subsistent farmer	26	Male	Ordinary level	Zezuru
2(n=1)	Community worker	49	Female	Grade 7	Zezuru
N=5					

Source: Fieldwork

Details on peacebuilding activities in Chikambi village were presented in Chapter Seven.

Chanakira VPC support visit: The aim of touring Chanakira village was to know what was happening there with respect to projects, knowledge of conflict resolution among members of the local VPC and the associations that each individual member belonged to. Of the seven members that make up the committee, we met with five, shown in Table 22, comprising four men and one woman who is the treasurer.

Table 22: Demographic characteristics for Chanakira VPC

Number	Composition	Age group	Sex	Level of Edu.	Language
1(n=1)	Subsistent farmer	58	Male	Junior certificate	Karanga
2(n=1)	Development officer	40	Female	Diploma	Tonga
3(n=1)	Driver	38	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
4(n=1)	Traditional leader	36	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
5(n=1)	Entrepreneur	28	Male	Ordinary level	Tonga
N=5					

Source: Fieldwork

Details on peacebuilding activities in Chanakira village are presented in Chapter Seven. Following this report, the WPC gave a round of applause to the secretary and the rest of the team for being able to execute the task on behalf of the entire WPC on 13 March.

Official resignation by Mr. Chivasa from WPC secretariate: Before the close of this meeting, I officially asked for relief from serving as a secretary in order to dedicate all my efforts to writing the PhD report. The committee granted me the permission to be relieved and co-opted a lady to take over the position of secretary. The committee resolved that a peacebuilding constitution was to be written on 6 April 2015. To

that effect, the committee tasked the out-going secretary to come up with a template for peacebuilding constitution which I agreed.

6.8.3 WPC meeting: 6 April 2015

The agenda of this meeting was to write a peacebuilding constitution (see Appendix 13 for peacebuilding constitution). The then secretary was tasked to type the peacebuilding template draft and distribute it to all the members. In coming up with a template for the peacebuilding constitution the secretary consulted with the chairperson, visited Google sources and gleaned some insights from the Mubaiwa ward of Wedza district to come up with a draft peacebuilding constitution template. The inter-WPC meeting in Wedza was also instrumental in coming up with some sections of the peacebuilding constitution template. On 17 January, during a WPC meeting in Wedza, I was careful to observe the various sections that were contained in the constitution for Mubaiwa peacebuilding constitution. I took the pains to write down some sections on 17 January which I visited on 4 April in preparation for the writing of the peacebuilding constitution on 6 April. Since the aim of the inter-WPC meeting was for us all to learn from each other, WPC members were free to interact and to ask questions for clarity related to peace committees at ward level.

Ward 8 peace committee had written a *Mukando* scheme constitution which I had also carried and I showed it to other WPC members during the meeting. We also shared a copy of the *Mukando* scheme constitution to all the WPC members present to see how it was structured and the elements contained. As such, when I was tasked to come up with a peacebuilding constitution template, I was able to remember some of the critical areas that were in Mubaiwa ward's peacebuilding constitution and I visited my notebook. From Mubaiwa peacebuilding constitution I was able to pick the following thematic sections: *preamble, objectives, formation of the committee, meetings, miscellaneous*. However their constitution had six sections and Ward 8 peace committee has 17 sections in its template (See Appendix 12 for peacebuilding constitution template).

From Google I searched for peacebuilding constitutions but could not find anything as at 4 April 2015. However, I was able to access the terms of reference for ministries of peace in Nepal and a report by Irungu (2001) of his experiences in Karamoja which borders Kenya and Uganda. From the Nepal ministry of peace I was able to pick the following sections: *the background to the constitution, core values, objectives and activities*. The report by Irungu was insightful too, because I was also able to pick out the following sections: *criteria for would-be peace committee members* which I changed to *qualities expected of would-be peace committees, activities to be done by the peace committee* and *resources required*

which I changed to *resource mobilization*. Out of these items I was able to come up with a template comprising of 17 suggested sections and these were used by the WPC on 6 April to come up with a draft peacebuilding constitution which was reviewed on and adopted procedurally on 22 July 2015 (for details on peacebuilding constitution template, see Appendix 12).

Members involved in the development of the peacebuilding constitution involved four males and one female. The then secretary handed over a template to everyone and they started reading through and filling up information which they thought was relevant for ward 8. The constitution was written in Shona language. The meeting for writing the peacebuilding constitution started at 11:08 and ended at 15:00 hours. Since I was relieved from active participation, I was only waiting for an opportunity for a review of the peacebuilding constitution and to conduct a preliminary evaluation of the WPC as an exit route for the current study. July was proposed as the next month for the review of the constitution and its adoption as a legal document. The choice of the month of July was necessitated by the assumption that a period of three months was going to give the WPC ample time to revise and think through the draft peacebuilding constitution individually after which they were going to come together to review and adopted this constitution as a legal document.

6.8.4 WPC meeting: Tuesday 22 July 2015

The agenda was to review the peacebuilding constitution after which it was to be adopted as an official guiding and legal document for Vimbainashe Matiti peacebuilding committee for the next five years. Before the review of the constitution, the then secretary conducted an evaluation through a set of questions that he had prepared to determine whether the WPC had made an impact or not (see Appendix 6 for evaluation guide questions). The then secretary was tasked with the responsibility to read through each section while every member was listening. Each member had his/her own copy of the constitution where members needed clarity they asked the secretary to read again and members were to explain what they thought was the meaning of that section. Not many changes were made except for section 4.1.3 *Members of the village peace committee* which previously read that the village head shall be *an ex-officio member of the village peace committee*. On 22 July, the WPC agreed to alter it to read that *the village head shall be the chairperson of the VPC*.

Another item that was changed significantly was the term of office for the WPC. On 6 April some members had agreed that the term of office for the WPC should be three years after which a new committee was to be elected. Following a review of the draft peacebuilding constitution for its second round on 22 July 2015 members agreed that the term of office should be increased to five years. The then

secretary was tasked with the responsibility to factor in the changes and make a print out of this document which was to be handed over to Chief Seke, ward 8 councillor and the ZRP member in charge for signing to make the document more binding and legal. Before the close of the meeting, the WPC unanimously adopted the peacebuilding constitution and declared it official. The secretary took the chance to ask the PAG on the extent to which the creation of the WPC was beneficial to ward 8 and the lessons that the PAG has learnt over a period of nine months (see Appendix 6 for evaluation guide questions). Furthermore, the secretary was to see to it that there were two versions: the English Language and Shona versions. The next date of meeting was proposed as August 2015. This meeting took us from 11:15 to 15:00 hours. Below is a picture of the PAG that participated in the evaluation on 22 July 2015. T/shirts donated by the researcher on 22 July 2015 were officially handed over to the PAG as a contribution to peacebuilding in Seke and to enhance visibility of the WPC.

6.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has described the steps taken by a small advisory team of 14 members that I have worked with as from September 2014 to July 2015. These steps resulted in the setting up of a WPC and three VPCs and the subsequent evaluation. To create the groundwork for testing the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8, Chapter 4 reviewed the steps involved in putting up an informal peace committee in place. This chapter implemented the five steps of the PAR cycle as adopted in the current study. However, following the PAR cycle was sometimes not linear but back and forth as the process involved stakeholders who were also busy with other things. Using hands-on experience of working with local people this study concluded that setting up an informal peace committee is not a far-fetched goal as this intervention can serve as a vehicle for collaboration between the researcher and community members. A number of lessons were drawn out of this experience of putting a WPC in place. The major one was that the self-selection model can be tested at any community and it is compatible with PAR. This model was tested in Ward 8 and results have shown that informal LPCs are a direct response by communities to address peace challenges affecting their well-being.



Figure 17: WPC after constitution review on 22 July 2015.

PART IV: DATA AND ANALYSIS

CHAPTER SEVEN: DATA

7.1 Introduction

This chapter contains results that emerged from in-depth interviews, participant observations, analysis by the PAG and narratives of lived experiences of informal peace committees by individuals from four selected districts in Zimbabwe. To add value to the data collected, this chapter presented results from interviews. I felt that the study could not be complete without the voices of stakeholders whom I coded as (stakeholder 1-6) (see presentation of responses from stakeholders below.) Data from stakeholders was obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews (see Appendix 4). As mentioned, this study established a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district and during the process of collecting data I observed a number of key issues that were pertinent to understanding procedures for setting up informal LPCs at community level. Thus, there is some data that I obtained by observing phenomena as they were unfolding and these observations are expected not only to benefit practitioners in the field but to contribute to existing knowledge on informal LPCs at local communities in Zimbabwe and beyond.

The current study was predominantly participatory, the process involved was not linear but cyclical. The results that emerged from the collected, presented and analysed data by the PAG could not be left out since the knowledge generated by the PAG has informed the practice related to the setting up of informal LPCs both at ward and village levels in Seke. I felt that the study was incomplete without the results of the PAG self-evaluation, reflections on village tours and support visits which are reflected in the presentation below. Since this study was focused on informal LPCs, it incorporated narratives of lived experiences of informal LPCs. Narratives of lived experiences of informal LPCs in Wedza, Marondera, Mutare and Harare districts (see Appendix 7) and their varied experiences added value to the current study, thus enhancing a new practice in the creation informal LPCs at community level.

7.2 Interview responses from stakeholders in Ward 8

It is significant that all data collected using key informant interviews was presented verbally in order to appreciate their contributions to the current study. Six key informant interviews coded as stakeholder 1 to 6 were sampled and their responses were captured below.

Stakeholder 1 (she is a subsistent farmer and a VPC in Chikambi village.)

She understands peace as '*kugarisana zvakanaka*' (cordial existence) and as '*kusava nebishi nemhere-mhere*' (the absence of angry quarrels). When asked to elaborate on how angry quarrels raptures cordial existence. She emphasized that angry quarrels give birth to household breakdown in that when individuals get caught up in angry quarrels, hatred is roped in and the significant others can be caught up in the same conflict resulting in anger and hatred flaring up in a number of people. From her own view, such a scenario results in the breakdown not only of relationships but households. The point is cordial existence does not suggests the absence of conflict. In fact cordial existence as it is understood by stakeholder 1 involves forgiving each other's misdeeds.

Stakeholder 1 understands peacebuilding as the facilitation of dialogue between conflicting parties and running income generating projects. Further, she said if one does not work with his/her hands there is no way one can improve his/her livelihoods. Stakeholder 1 explained that:

I am now thinking of reinvigorating my previous projects which have to do with improving my livelihoods. I want to resuscitate the project that I started with my household. I once embarked on a market gardening project but it did not take off. Out of this experience, I have learnt that any project requires determination and sacrifice in order to produce the intended results.

In summation, she emphasized that in peacebuilding love is the cardinal aspect of life which should run from the individual, household and the community and love is number one of all. Further on, she said through love, one is able to help other people to restrain from doing things that we consider as anti-social and to provide counsel to other people. She also, highlighted that, I like income generating projects because a project shows that an individual knows what she is doing because the life we live nowadays is that kind of life that if one is not engaged in some kind of income generating project I do not see such a person making it in life in terms of achieving one's aspirations.

Stakeholder 1 links peace with cordial existence and she stressed the point that peacebuilding involves the improvement of livelihoods through income generating projects. According to her, cordial co-existence without hatred coupled with income generating projects results in peace. Further, she believes that peacebuilding starts at individual homes when that particular household starts an income generating project to ensure the family is well fed.

Stakeholder 2 (she is a subsistent farmer, area coordinator for Shamwari yemwanasikana and WPC treasurer.)

Stakeholder number 2 had the view that peacebuilding involves '*kugara murunyararo, kutsiurana munezvakanaka, kugara vanhu vakabatana uye vari pamwe chete*' (peaceful co-existence, correcting each other in love, it involves unity, and oneness). Further on, she said that peacebuilding involves '*kutaurirana, kunzwisiana, kuregererana kana tatadzirana*' (engaging each other, mutual understanding, forgiving one another after someone has been wronged). For her, one aspect that determines a sustainable WPC is to continue to be in one accord both in planning and implementation of ideas. She suggested that since the WPC is involved in *Mukando* scheme, they should buy ball-point pens and donate them to disadvantaged school children. She acknowledged that this is something that she learnt out of LPC capacity building workshop which she desires to see spearheaded by the WPC.

When asked what could hinder the WPC from progressing, stakeholder 2 said that there is need to avoid factionalism within the committee because factionalism creates a disjointed committee. She also was of the view that if there is an issue which some members do not agree with, attempts should be made to address the issue rather than backbiting. She insisted that it is better for all committee members not to agree on something but also making efforts as a group to address sticking issues together rather than to brush contentious issues aside as this behaviour can potentially sow seeds of divisions and ultimately bitterness if remains unabated. Stakeholder 2 said that the WPC should start with a poultry project. For her, if the WPC agrees to set aside monies from the *Mukando* scheme they can buy road-runner chickens¹ consult fellow village members with coop of chickens and asks for space to run this project for a certain period of time until we have our own coop of chickens elsewhere. She insisted that engaging ourselves in an income generating project is the way to help promote unity and peaceful co-existence.

It is clear that stakeholder 2 understands peacebuilding as a pragmatic process-that is entrepreneurship by another name. This approach was discussed in detail in Chapter three (see section 3.3: *The means to build peace*). In summation, she urged the WPC to take a step further through the provision of stationery to school children who are disadvantaged in the ward. Thus, from her own understanding, peacebuilding involves sharing with the under-privileged and it also involves unity and sister/brotherhood which translate into coexistence.

¹ Road-runner chickens are indigenous chickens in Zimbabwe, raised for eggs and food.

Stakeholder 3 (He is a minister of religion, entrepreneur, a district focal person for ECLF in Seke and the chairperson of the WPC in Ward 8 of Seke. I have coded him as Pastor 00010 in other sections.)

Stakeholder 3 runs a crèche, sells airtime and paraffin at Murisa business centre. People involved in running this crèche are one male and three females. The aim of these projects are to improve livelihoods. He identified the need to start a crèche at Murisa business centre to support children between the ages of 3 to 4 years of age as well as providing an early childhood education programme. He is skilled in running crèches and in resolving conflicts. He has a registered Co-operative union which has since stopped functioning in early 2000 due to financial constraints. For him, the activities he cited fall squarely under peacebuilding.

Stakeholder 3 was appointed as the district focal person in Seke in 2012. As part of the planning stage of the current study, I made an appointment to meet with stakeholder 3 and was very supportive when I first met him on 30 September 2014 to discuss plans to work together in the setting up of a WPC. I met him on several occasions in order to get information on how we could work with ECLF trained participants in order to set up a WPC instead of working with raw community members. Out of these discussions, it emerged that we needed to consult with the provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012, on the need to set up a WPC. Stakeholder 3 booked an appointment with Chaplain 00012 and we met at Makoni shopping centre on 17 October 2014. At this meeting, Chaplain 00012 supported the idea that a WPC was long overdue in Ward 8, and responsibility was put on the two of us to see to it that a WPC was put in place. Resultantly, three criteria emerged: the first involved the number of participants in a WPC which could be 20 or less members. The second involved inclusivity of the peace committee that it should include youths, government departments, political parties, women and different churches that are in the ward. Third, every would-be peace committee must have undergone the CPMRT sensitization workshop. The idea that a peace committee should be inclusive and that the number could be 20 or less seemed achievable for us.

After a series of planning meetings, stakeholder 3 took up the responsibility to appoint a 15 member WPC on 7 November 2014 and he became the chairperson of that peace committee. From the date of appointment of the peace committee on 7 November 2014 to 22 July 2015, stakeholder 3 has provided leadership and monthly meetings have been consistent. After a self-evaluation of the activities of Ward 8 pilot WPC, stakeholder 3 was planning to have all the 21 wards in Seke having WPCs by the end of 2015 and 2016. Of the 21 wards in Seke district, 8 are communal while 13 are peri-urban. According to him, his plan is to start with communal wards of which Ward 8 already has a WPC and five VPCs in place meaning that there are 7 more wards to have WPCs. He emphasized that Ward 8 peace committee was a

pilot in that it was his first experience and out of this experience he has learnt a lot- some good and bad lessons. On the basis of this hands-on experience in Ward 8, he pointed out that he now knows where to start, what to do and whom to consult in order to set up peace committees that serve the interests of the community. He says in Ward 8, although all the villages in Ward 8 are still to be sensitized, stakeholder 3 remains optimistic and committed to having all the 29 villages in Ward 8 sensitized and the 20 wards left in Seke to have WPCs created in the short run.

When asked what is involved in conflict resolution he said that when individuals are in conflict he first listens to each disputant's story and then bring the two together to facilitates dialogue. Further, he said the major objective of conflict resolution is to facilitate dialogue which results in a compromised outcome in which former disputants should agree to abide by. From his perspective, conflict resolution must aim to achieve cordial harmony between former conflictants- at that point it can be declared that a conflict has been resolved.

Stakeholder 3 understands peacebuilding as an experience that begins at individual level. He said peacebuilding involves the ability to deal with one's own internal tug of war first because if one wants to build peace with others it is not possible to be in cordial harmony with other people if one still suffers from internal tug of war. Pertaining to the meaning of the phrase 'tug of war' stakeholder 3 said that:

This is what we call a clash of views/ideas or a troubled heart that takes place within the life of an individual. This occurs when one sees someone talking to oneself whilst walking or seated. What will be happening is that the individual will be caught in-between two or more incompatible ideas and talking to oneself is a manifestation of an intra-personal conflict. If this tug of war is not addressed it is not easy to build peace with others.

When asked whether it is possible to build peace when one is experiencing a tug of war within oneself, he said, every individual should at some point deal with internal tug of war after which one can be able to assist other people experiencing inter-personal conflicts. To quote him verbatim, he said:

This is where we say, *peace begins with me* to mean that I have managed to settle down my own internal issues troubling my life. So we can say *peace begins with you* meaning that when one meets two people experiencing a troubled relationship it can be possible to reconcile the two. After reconciling these two we can then say *peace begins with all of us* because we are now a group working together to achieve cordial harmony.

Stakeholder 3 seems to believe that peace does not fall from heaven but people create peace in their villages as individuals and as groups when he mentioned that *peace begins with me, peace begins with you and peace begins with all of us*. This motto was used in Zimbabwe in the run to the 2013 elections and was instrumental to this relative peaceful elections.

Furthermore, stakeholder 3 insisted that each individual person should sort out his life first that is to be at peace with oneself, and only then can that individual help to create peace with other people around him/her. Stakeholder 3 also mentioned that, to demonstrate that one has understood issues to do with peacebuilding, when a conflict occurs, such an individual should demonstrate the propensity to settle the conflict amicably. At another time, he said that: “when people are involved in peacebuilding we should witness some positive changes in terms of relationships.” This stakeholder also mentioned that: “this is where when we hear that so and so have been fighting the question to ask is what have we done as peace builders to have these conflictants settle the matter amicably.” He also asserted that: “it is not possible for someone who has experienced peace to just sit back when other people need the same peace.” His major thrust was that when people are involved in peacebuilding activities, their relationships and livelihoods should be seen improving from good to better. For example, he highlighted that in cases where two people who have not been seeing each other eye to eye, they should be seen talking to each other, only then we can say peace has visited them. Further on, he pointed out that if two people who previously could not talk to each other are seen asking each other salt, we can safely say there is now peace between them. Generally speaking, stakeholder 3 insisted that the overall goal of peacebuilding always has been the improvement of relationships.

On the improvement of livelihoods, he commended Ward 8 peace committee for starting the *Mukando* scheme. He said this project shows that Ward 8 peace committee has foresight that they do not just want to hold peace committee meetings. He said, *Mukando* scheme is a sign that the WPC want to build peace through projects. He insisted that starting *Mukando* scheme is strength that the WPC now has demonstrated in that they have somewhere to start a peacebuilding programme. However, he felt that despite the little and small amounts of money that they are contributing for *Mukando* scheme, the good thing are if a financial problem emerges they have somewhere to start.

Pertaining to what may hinder progress of the WPC stakeholder 3 said that if all the members of the peace committee do not look down upon each other, embrace trust amongst its members they can progress smoothly. He advised that the committee should work together as a team, be of one accord and be supportive of each other; this can bring transformation to Seke district. Stakeholder 3 links intra-personal peace with peace between individuals. Further, he linked conflict resolution, income generating projects with peacebuilding. In summation he applauded the WPC for starting *Mukando* scheme as a sign that they have started to walk in the peacebuilding path.

Stakeholder 4 (She is the Ward 8 coordinator, works for Women’s Affairs and WPC member. She has worked as a ward coordinator for the past 11 years in Ward 8 and is the ward councillor’s secretary for the WADCO.)

Stakeholder 4 said that peacebuilding involves peaceful co-existence, reconciliation and cordial harmony with other people. She emphasized that these elements create an enabling environment for development to be realized. As the ward coordinator, who works with VIDCOs and WADCOs with a thrust in community development, she understands community development as the formation of groups by individuals in order to embark on income generating projects. She cited *Mukando* scheme as a classic example of a project involving a group of people. She insisted that during the *Mukando* scheme people learn a number of lessons. She said: “people learn that money has other functions besides buying meat and beer.” For her, “that knowledge is in community development” she insisted.

As mentioned already, stakeholder 4 works with all the 29 villages in Ward 8 encouraging community members to work in groups in particular to participate in rural agricultural shows in which interested community members’ exhibit their agricultural produce, shown in Figure 18 and small livestock.





Figure 18: Dry show in Ward 8 on 17 June, 2015

In the Figure above, rural people were exhibiting small grains, such as rapoko, millet; cow peas, beans and maize among other grains. Agricultural shows of this nature are popularly known as dry shows because they exhibit grains after harvest has passed. Stakeholder 4 stressed that agricultural produce exhibition helps to build peace in communities because people are encouraged to be self-reliant and thus, increasing their capacities for availability of food sufficient for their homes and communities. She stressed that food production falls under food security and nutrition cluster in the ZIM ASSET blueprint.

Another dimension of community development from stakeholder 4's perspective is that it involves the participation of individuals and groups in agricultural shows, keeping small livestock, beekeeping, vegetable drying, and peanut butter making among other activities. Further, she said individuals and communities engaging in such activities do not have time to fight each other as each one will be busy with his/her project to ensure that it brings about results but those people who have nothing to engage themselves with but spend time loitering have the energy to fight each other. She then said, as the ward coordinator, her key result areas involve among others, to encourage people to engage in low-cost income generating activities that help to improve their livelihoods at community level. She insisted that at dry shows like the one held on 17 June 2015, shown in Figure 18, people were encouraged to work with their own hands and they learnt from their peers how to grow maize, small grains, cow peas, vegetables, and other agricultural produce. Further on, she said, at dry shows those individuals who may want to learn how certain crops are grown, how small livestock's such as rabbits are reared and so on, they get that knowledge for free and are made to know the different types of crops that are found in Zimbabwe. She

said that during agricultural shows anyone with money can buy any produce or small livestock that is exhibited at the show at a very low price compared to those at the market.

When asked to explain the link between community development and peacebuilding, she said that without peaceful co-existence, cooperation and cordial harmony projects which are central for community development cannot take off. Stakeholder 4 said “without peace people cannot come together to form groups for income-generating projects. If we attempt to embark on a project they will fail. In other words, “peace is a pre-condition for community development.” Further, she highlighted that most of the projects that we embark on, if we are to scrutinise why they fail it comes back to the fact that some projects could not take off because people were deterred by grudges that lingered around resulting in the project failing to produce results. She insisted that “peace always should come first before everything else and this is what makes us to develop as communities.”

Stakeholder 4 seems to hold the belief that if communities are not experiencing co-existence, cordial harmony or reconciliation there is no way that community can develop. In her view, it is the absence of peace that hinders community development, hence the need for communities to build peace. The approach of stakeholder 4 to peacebuilding is that people should form groups and embark on income generating projects in order to build peace. In her understanding, when people form groups co-existence, reconciliation, cohesion and cordial harmony are end results and these features are building blocks for peace. Thus, from her own view peacebuilding involves encouraging people to work in groups with special emphasis on self-reliance, co-existence and reconciliation.

Stakeholder 5 (She is the deputy chairperson of the WPC, ZANU PF ward political commissar, Area coordinator for Shamwari yemwanasikana, Area facilitator for Virl micro-finance, Area coordinator for *Mukando* scheme Seke rural cluster, committee member for Child protection unit and a stakeholder for Population services international. I have coded her as 00013 in other sections.)

On 7 November 2014, she was appointed deputy chairperson for the WPC. Stakeholder 5 was one of the women whom stakeholder 3 asked to mobilize local communities in Ward 8 for CPMRT and LPCs capacity building workshops in the surrounding villages such as Marimbi and Murisa. Stakeholder 5 is one of those women known to have the ability to mobilize people whenever there is a function or an event in Ward 8. For example, in 2013, when the district focal person asked her to mobilize members of the community from surrounding villages for a CPMRT sensitization workshop at Murisa business centre, stakeholder 5 together with other stakeholders mobilize about 85 people and the workshop took off

between 15, 16 and 17 May. On 5 August she was instrumental again in mobilizing 30 participants that were required for evaluation of the CMRT sensitisation workshop by ECLF.

Stakeholder 5 was one of the first women to be trained by CARE international and Viri micro finance on entrepreneurship and financial management after which she was instrumental in the training of 710 rural men and women in Seke district in 2010. On 8 November 2014, when the secretary of the WPC and two other members were invited, she showed us certificates, shown in Figure 19, offered to participants after training.



Figure 19: Certificates offered after undergoing *Mukando* scheme training

As shown on the Figure above, stakeholder 5 highlighted that rural women and men in Ward 8 were trained in financial literacy and entrepreneurial training. According to her, *Mukando* scheme is a classic example of entrepreneurship. In the site visit on 8 November 2014, every woman that we found at a *Mukando* scheme was holding a pen and a book to record transactions for accountability purposes. Details of what transpired on 8 November 2014 site visit for *Mukando* scheme are in Chapter Seven. Stakeholder

5 insisted that training offered by Viri micro-finance has helped all the women to understand *Mukando* scheme and they now know what they are supposed to do in their various groups.

According to her, *Mukando* involves people who contributes money and lends it to its members who pay back at the end of the month with 20 percent interest. She said at the end of the cycle which could be six months or a year, the money is put together and shared equally. Stakeholder 5 continues to facilitate and coordinates existing and newly formed *Mukando* scheme groups in Seke district. She is committed to *Mukando* scheme and is hopeful that *Mukando* scheme is one of the mechanisms that help to promote peacebuilding in Seke district and perhaps across Zimbabwe. Besides, stakeholder 5 runs a market gardening project involving five people of which three are males and two are females. She said that the aims of these projects are to assist the disadvantaged and to improve livelihoods at household and village level.

On 7 November 2014, she spearheaded a *Mukando* scheme and she secured buy-in from the WPC. Thus, the WPC has been running the *Mukando* scheme from 7 November 2014 and by the time of writing this report in July 2015 (see *Mukando* scheme constitution, Appendix 11), *Mukando* scheme was still running.

During the WPC meetings, stakeholder 5 occasionally got the opportunity to offer a word of prayer. The custom was that before the start and close of a meeting one or two members could be asked to offer a word of prayer. Of interests to this study is a prayer she offered on 19 December 2014. Stakeholder 5 offered this prayer:

In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit... we are here at a place you saw fit for us. Holy Father we pray for peace in our country, to have peace in our villages we live in and to have peace in our homes. We kindly ask our good Father before your face that we plan our activities with humble hearts because even as we are here it was not by our own strength but you made it possible for us to be here today. Make it possible for us and give us the power and willingness for there is no one amongst us who can build something durable except you alone. And for that reason, we ask you to give us the power to will and to do. Amen.

From this prayer, it is clear that stakeholder 5 strongly believes that peace is championed by God who then inspires people to promote peace amongst themselves. Further, she seems to believe that without God's enablement mankind cannot establish durable peace on earth. She also seems to believe that mankind cannot do it alone they need God to give them the will power to live in peace and to make plans for peace to continue to exist. In Zimbabwe, religion which include African tradition religion and Christianity play an important role in determining the behaviour of individuals and groups as revealed in a prayer by stakeholder 5.

Across the globe, it is a known fact that religious assumptions are an important factor on how individuals and groups perceive the world around them which also affects their social interaction (Kimball, 2002, p.197). In other words, spiritual values such as love, tolerance, forgiveness, justice or meekness have a bearing on the behaviour of the individual towards other people. Historically, there are individuals whose convictions in peace activism were based on spiritual traditions. This is true of people like Mohandas Gandhi (who was a Hindu), Martin Luther King Jr, (who was a Christian), Abdul Ghaffar Khan (who was a Muslim) and Thich Nhat Hanh (who was a Buddhist). These and other peace activists derived their moral power from spiritual resources. With these examples we can deduce the crucial connection that lies between religious resources and peace and this is demonstrated in a prayer offered by stakeholder 5. The WPC operated from this basic assumption that religion plays a critical role in the promotion of peace. By opening and closing WPC meetings with words of prayer it shows that this belief and practice are strong to the core in all members of the LPC in ward 8.

When asked what is involved in conflict resolution she said that suppose two people are in conflict, she can invite disputants for dialogue. She emphasized that she makes sure that each disputant is given time to tell his/her story and then asks disputants to propose a compromised solution to the satisfaction of all the parties.

Also, when asked on her concept of peacebuilding, she said that peacebuilding and development are inter-linked in that in order for people to embark on income generating projects without peace there is no way this can be achieved. She insisted that if peace is available people cooperate resulting in stability. Such an environment is conducive for income generating projects. Further, she said that if a community cooperates, work together and are in cordial harmony they can do various types of projects which help to reduce poverty and inequality at community level, thus, enhancing peace at community level.

Stakeholder 5 is of the view that development involves transformation in the area which manifests in the form of projects. She said that development involves people embarking in income-generating projects. Income-generating projects brings about transformation in the lives of community members in that they are able to escape poverty and to meet their educational, housing and other basic requirements. From this, she seems to believe that community development is not a stand-alone strategy. She linked peacebuilding, development and community development as complementary.

Concerning the types of projects the WPC should embark on, stakeholder 5 indicated that the WPC should not sit back and relax since the peace committee already has an on-going *Mukando* scheme. She

was of the view that, the WPC should start buying stationery for disadvantaged school children in Ward 8. She also held the view that, since there are three schools in Ward 8, for a start the WPC should buy two packs of writing exercise books and three cartoons of ball-point pens and then distribute books at one school and ball point pens at other schools. However, she sees the link between the provisions of stationery to disadvantaged school children with development and community development. According to her, distributing stationery to school children is another aspect of community development.

She was of the view that the WPC should embark on a road-runner poultry project. She said road-runners can be kept in different stages and she said this project could have been started a long time ago. She also held the view that embarking on income generating projects is the improvement of livelihoods. To quote her verbatim, she said that:

Projects are an important variable in peacebuilding and therefore, people should not have a poverty mentality. I want to say we are not poor as we might think because we already have resources at our disposal-the problem is we do not want to use our mind to be innovative. We must be self-sufficient and the only way we can achieve it is by working in groups to start income generating projects.

For stakeholder 5, the struggle against poverty is won when people work together and start embarking on income generating projects. Although she was of the view that most people do not want to be innovative and start income generating projects which leads to poverty and underdevelopment, she highlighted that people should come together and start projects. She however proposed that the WPC must join hands together and be determined to support each other to start income generating projects alongside *Mukando* scheme so that peace can become a reality in Ward 8.

Overall, stakeholder 5 links peacebuilding, development with community development. She strongly believed that peacebuilding, development and community development are all bundled together in income generating projects because individuals enaging in projects have the propensity to collaborate thus enhancing social cohesion, relationship building and improvement of livelihoods. In summation, she urges the WPC to be practical and proposed that one way to continue to build peace is to run a poultry project alongside *Mukando* scheme.

Stakeholder 6 (She is a social worker, and works for Shamwari yemwanasikana, a stakeholder organization in Ward 8).

As a social worker, she understands community development as a process involving bringing people together to form groups for purposes of embarking on income generating projects, creating a platform

together in order to make life better in the community. She indicated that, her organization is in Ward 8 for three particular reasons. In the first place, she said her organization seeks to engage all stakeholders to find ways of partnering with them and to know what other stakeholders are doing in order to increase the impact in the community. In the second place, she said that, her organization deals with abuse cases involving the girl child from zero to 18 years of age and the organization offers psycho-social support and counselling that is their primary goal. In the third and final place, she said her organization in partnership with World children prize they distribute stationery to schools in Ward 8 as well as sponsoring trophies and creating girls' clubs at every school in Ward 8.

On whether there is any link between peacebuilding and community development, she said:

There is definitely a link because for a community, for any country to develop, for any situation to be fruitful there has to be peace. And if there is no consensus and agreement between all the stakeholders involved it hinders the rate of development and you will find out that based on community development we are dealing with families, fathers, mothers and children, if there is no peace in the home it affects children, it affects the marriage as well as individuals in the village. Her words indicates that, stakeholder 6 beliefs that peace is a pre-condition for community development.

Stakeholder 6 voiced her own views on peacebuilding. She mentioned that:

I think peace starts from the individual internally, to be secure and comfortable with yourself then outwardly show your respect for your wife or husband and for your children as well. And for the children you will be setting an example, then it becomes like a circle they have to follow.

In other words, she was of the view that peace is contagious which means that peace can be passed on from one person experiencing peace to another. Stakeholder 6 saw the link between peace and being comfortable with oneself which creates peacefulness in oneself. Further on, she said,

Personally I think it is very possible to be comfortable within oneself, off course one cannot be fully 100 per cent happy considering the realities of life. Being comfortable or peaceful means coming to terms with life that is being content, accepting the reality of life that life is what it is. Therefore, I will not stop myself from living but I will accept realities of life as they are but determined to improve conditions that hinder life into becoming better. For me that is peace, that is being content.

For stakeholder 6, although she believes that peace is achievable, she was of the view that peace is not an event. At one point she said, "coming to a peace state is a continuous process." She seems to be of the view that peace is like change because she said "peace is like change. Change will always be a process not an event."

Concerning the contributions of Shamwari yemwanasikana to peacebuilding, stakeholder 6 indicated that, although they do not use the term peace or peacebuilding in their mandate, Shamwari yemwanasikana is definitely contributing to a safe home for girls and those that are victims of rape. Furthermore, she

believes that her organization seeks to create a more conducive environment for children to grow up in and for her she believes that is peacebuilding. To quote her verbatim, she said:

For us we also provide an aspect of hope for the kids. Where you find there is abuse for the girl child-when she comes to us she feels ah I have got somewhere and someone to express how I feel. This contributes to peace because we do not only deal with victims but the people around the girl child. We empower the family and the girl because the girl is going to be dependent on the family on that aspect we are building peace.

Overall, stakeholder 6 strongly believes that the work that the WPC and Shamwari yemwanasikana are doing is good and complementary. She said, there is definitely ways of coming together between the WPC and Shamwari yemwanasikana as partners to ensure safe homes and safe people. The creation of a safe home which is the core-business is the basis of peacebuilding.

A convergence of views from stakeholders 1 to 6 indicates that peace is understood as a precondition for both development and community development. Peacebuilding therefore seeks to create an enabling environment for people to work together in order to achieve their aspirations.

7.3 Results from participant observations

Friday 7 November 2014: Following a call for an information meeting by the district focal person we arrived at the venue. There were already three women who were seated on the ground. When we arrived they stopped talking as we began to greet each other. We spent some minutes into the starting time to make the seating arrangement suitable for a meeting. As we were coming from Pastor 00011's house we brought chairs enough for every participant. I asked two women who were sitting on the ground to grab a chair and sit. The two ladies indicated that they were seated comfortably on the ground. I presumed that maybe it was their background that made them confident to sit on the ground, although there were some empty chairs. I was not alarmed to see such elderly women (in their late 50s) preferring to sit on the ground while everyone else was seated on chairs. Faced with this reality I contemplated how cultural values and social norms play an important role in shaping the behaviour of individuals even outside their homes.

In Shona rural communities, information meetings are usually called for by the village head, headman, ward councillor or the chief. This information meeting shared common features with traditional information meetings which most if not all participants that were invited were familiar with. In rural areas, Shona gatherings such as village court are characterized by sitting arrangements in which men sit on stools/chairs and women sit on the ground. This is a widely practiced arrangement that women do not sit on chairs in public and in the presence of men.

Nevertheless, meetings such as this one involving a peace committee was different from traditional gatherings in the village. I personally expected these two ladies to sit comfortably on the chairs provided since the information meeting was convened outside the venue where village assemblies/committees are normally convened. I expected these women to feel free to share seats with men since the meeting was convened at the church premises where women equally share seats with men. The underlying value of equality between men and women in some churches in Zimbabwe explains why men and women share chairs in Christian churches. Reeler (2007, p.18) demonstrates that “equality is another quality which, while recognizing diversity, asserts that no human beings are of greater or lesser value.” My dilemma was I could not ascertain whether sitting on the ground for women was associated with inferiority to men. Simply put, I could not tell what this gesture [preferring to sit on the ground] signified.

In the village court, for instance, sitting on the ground has no inferiority complex connotation because there are usually not sufficient chairs enough for everyone except for the village head and his counsellors. Faced with this inconclusive social dynamic, my only conclusion was in agreement with Reeler (2007, p.15) when he said, like development, peacebuilding is “complex and highly influenced by tangible forces such as tradition [and] culture ...” Whoever said people do not leave their culture and tradition behind is quite correct. I witnessed this first-hand at this information meeting on 7 November 2014.

However, in the subsequent meetings, these two women sat comfortably on chairs like everybody else. And the answer to the question of what could have led them to refuse to sit on chairs the first day is unknown. The important thing about human behaviour is that it can change depending on the circumstances and this is important for peacebuilding because human behaviour is an important variable.

Overall, what can be learnt from this observation is that human behaviour can change for better or for worse. Another important lesson is that we should be on the look-out for situations that can prompt individuals and groups to change their behaviours whether in a peaceful or violent direction. From a peacebuilding dimension, it is important to predict human behaviour in that once human behaviour becomes predictable, it can be possible to come up with an appropriate interventions that helps sustain peace in communities.

7.3.1 Results from observations of *Mukando* scheme on 8 November 2014

On 7 November 2014, the three of us, the WPC chair, one committee member and I, were invited to observe a *Mukando* scheme involving 10 women each representing different *Mukando* groups. The meeting was arranged by a group of women in Seke rural cluster. We were told that this meeting was going to be held on 8 November at 8:30 in the morning and was held at Mrs 00013, who is the current deputy chair of the WPC. We were urged to attend and observe this occasion in order to learn how *Mukando* scheme was being administered.

When we arrived at Mrs. 00013's house at 09:15, we found out that the *Mukando* scheme had already started. We were led at an open space where discussions were on-going. These women were seated on the ground in a large semi-circle with their back turned towards a house under construction, shown in Figure 20. We were welcomed by one of the ladies on behalf of the group. Mrs 00013 welcomed us and all the women expressed their gratitude when they were told that we had come all the way to learn about the *Mukando* scheme from them. Mrs 00013, who welcomed us briefly, explained the purpose of the meeting and what has been happening for the past decade (since *Mukando* began in 1998). The issues raised included that about 710 men and women had since graduated in 2010. She stressed that many women and men considered *Mukando* scheme a high priority for their livelihoods. On the side-lines of the occasion, many women that I occasionally talked to expressed sentiments that *Mukando* scheme was central to their day-to-day lives and was increasingly becoming part of their occupation. They pointed out that some young women in their villages were increasingly becoming interested and were joining *Mukando* scheme in order to develop their skills in entrepreneurship and improving their livelihoods. The majority of women made public declarations that they were committed to *Mukando* scheme in order to be self-sufficient. One woman said that: "*Mukando* scheme chased away conflicts in my house because we no longer fight over money to buy vegetables at home with my husband." The issues raised by these women were mainly to do with conflicts over insufficient basic needs, squabbles over money for sugar, cooking oil, bathing soap and school fees for children. They commended organizations such as CARE International and Virl micro-finance for providing technical support in the form of training in financial management.



Figure 20: A group of women attending Mukando scheme, 8 November 2014. Source: Fieldwork.

In the Figure above, looking on is a group of women who attended *Mukando* scheme on 8 November 2014, and each one of them was busy entering transactions after remitting their monthly instalments. Two men looking on at the extreme right are invitees; the WPC chair and a committee member. Behind their back is a five roomed house near completion.

According to Mrs. 00013's report, funds that were used for buying materials and labour came from the *Mukando* scheme. These women holding ball point pens with open books indicate that they were busy transacting and making calculations and entries. Further, Mrs. 00013 reported that these women were now due to securing individual loans of US\$300 from Viri Micro-finance on condition that each member was performing above average in the *Mukando* scheme cycles in their groups in the villages. The women in the Figure above represented different groups of *Mukando* scheme in their villages, some were representing a group 20 members, others of 30 or more. They had come to Mrs. 00013, the area trainer for purposes of updating their records which were due for inspection and assesement by Viri Micro-finance in order to secure loans.

Overall, I observed that although women at *Mukando* scheme did not mention peacebuilding, they were in fact building peace through the improvement of livelihoods of rural women and men. However, it was

only after I had listened to stories by some women as we conversed that the primary aim of *Mukando* was to promote cohesion, trust and relationships, thus promoting peacebuilding.

7.4 Results from analysis by PAG

This study involved a 14 member team from start to finish. I was the secretary of the PAG. The biographical data for PAG were captured in Chapter Four above.

7.4.1 Results of self-evaluation by the PAG on 16 January 2015

Results of self-evaluation were presented by the secretary at a meeting on 30 January 2015. These results served as the backcloth for the 2015 planned activities. On 16 January 2015, the PAG was excited to evaluate their own activities as reflected by one WPC member who remarked that:

Evaluation quarterly seeks to illustrate how the work was done, when and how the work was done and with what results? But what we have done today is an end of year self-evaluation in which we see ourselves as in a mirror as we begin to take notice of our activities, the good and the bad things that we encountered and achieved along the way. Through this self-evaluation we are able to tell whether we were successful or not and to propose what should be done in order to improve from our past.

These sentiments suggest a number of dynamics. The major ones include a sense of ownership, a feeling of having achieved the goal or willingness to evaluate their own behaviours and activities.

Five questions were used for self-evaluation (see Appendix 3). The overriding view on the concept of LPC was that it involved a group of people that came together with a common goal to promote social harmony and peaceful co-existence. Another overriding view was it involved group of people that has seen turmoil prevailing in a community and they make a decision to educate the community on the need for peaceful co-existence.

On the functions of the peace committee, the popular view was that it should sensitize communities on peace issues at funerals, field days, agricultural shows, ward assembly and village assemblies' forums, at weddings and any other ward or village gatherings. These forums were perceived as strategic for disseminating the gospel of peace to the community.

On the methods used for creating a WPC, the overriding view was that self-selection process by appointment was the appropriate method since the WPC had no constitution to provide a framework for setting up a peace committee. There was general consensus that the WPC had a responsibility to write a peacebuilding constitution. Within that constitution, the overriding view was that the committee should come up with a blue print on procedures for setting up LPCs both at ward and village levels. However,

they emphasized that the formation of a peace committee should be a responsibility of village assemblies (see Appendix 13: Peacebuilding constitution).

On challenges experienced by the WPC between 7 November and 27 December 2014, the overriding view was that attendance for monthly WPCs meetings was not satisfactory. It was pointed out that the number of members who regularly attended was sometimes below half and sometimes it was half. In addition, it was acknowledged that attendance by some peace committee members continued to fluctuate as there was no single meeting on which all the 15 members ever pitched up as a full house. The overriding impression was that those that were determined to come should not be deterred by defaulting members as this was a common feature among human beings to take a wait and see attitude.

On time-consciousness, the overall impression was that some members have not been time-conscious as most if not all the meetings started after the agreed time had lapsed. All members were urged to be time conscious in future to ensure that those that arrive on time do not get frustrated as they have to wait for late comers.

However, the WPC applauded itself for being able to write a *Mukando* scheme constitution. The overriding view was that the ability to make decisions as a group was a strength that sustained the WPC. Another overriding view but also similar to the above was that the capacity to pool monetary resources by some members in order to attend monthly meetings as some members had to regularly meet their travel costs was another strength. Those members that came from far away villages such as Vera, Kuwora, Masona, Madhovi and Chitehwe were applauded for demonstrating sacrifice.

The WPC acknowledged that not all the 29 villages that make up Ward 8 were represented in the WPC. It was pointed out that only eight villages were represented namely; *Murisa, Chikambi, Chitehwe, Vera, Kuwora, Masona, Madhovi* and *Marimbi* villages. In view of this, the WPC made a resolution that a peacebuilding constitution should spell out clearly that all villages should be represented in the WPC in order to be inclusive. In the peacebuilding constitution, they created a WPC council which comprise of all members serving in VPCs across the 29 villages (see Appendix 13: Peacebuilding constitution, WPC council). The overriding view on inclusiveness was that the WPC should embrace equal representation of social groups such as women, youth, men and all the 29 villages in the WPC council.

Upon reflection of the analysis, the PAG came up with a blueprint on the concept of peacebuilding. According to the PAG, peacebuilding involved four elements:

- Building of relationships;
- It involves peaceful co-existence
- Development and carrying each other's burdens in all times; and
- Capacity building

This blueprint served as a guiding principle for the WPC during village sensitization tours in February 2015. In view of the four elements that underpin peacebuilding, the PAG made the following recommendations:

- To continue to promote the peacebuilding programme in Seke;
- To create VPCs in all the 29 villages;
- To write a peacebuilding constitution before the end of 2015;
- To conduct peacebuilding awareness campaigns working hand in glove with the ward councillor;
- To spelled out procedures for creating VPCs in the peacebuilding constitution;

The schema for peacebuilding developed on 30 January 2015 by the PAG became a blueprint that was disseminated to communities in Ward 8 starting with the ward assembly and the village tour. The village sensitization tour bred VPCs.

7.4.2 Results from creation of VPCs

Following reflections on self evaluation by the PAG on 30 January 2015, they recommended that VPCs should be put in place in all the 29 villages. On the concept of VPC, the overriding view was that a VPC is a structure consisting of seven adult members comprising of both men and women residing in the same village. They stressed that this structure was set by the village assembly. They emphasized that each peace committee at village level was required to be inclusive in terms of gender and the inclusion of social groups such as youths and women. The PAG suggested a set of aims for VPC. These were they:

- a) to co-operate with VIDCOs and other stakeholders in the village in spearheading peacebuilding programmes;*
- b) to promote and sustaining peacebuilding activities at village level;*
- c) to sensitize their host village for early warning signs of any looming conflict and early response;*
- d) to facilitate conflict resolution activities at village level;*
- e) to facilitate capacity building workshops at village level; and*
- f) to spearhead low-cost income-generating projects.*

The PAG designed a skills inventory data form which was completed by every member of the VPC (see Appendix 14). Those VPC members that were not able to read and write were assisted by members of the PAG who were always available to assist where necessary. In this data form there are three sections. The

first section dealt with the individual's biographical data that is the name of the person; sex; date of birth; national identification number; name of village; personal address; contacts; level of education; occupation and next of kin. The second section dealt with sectors that a particular person was affiliated to and position held in the VPC. The third section dealt with types of projects that individual members have embarked or currently running. After citing the types of projects the person was asked to indicate the number of people that are involved in running the project and the aims of the projects. This information was followed up by a request for the individual involved in the project to describe skills that s/he has in running any of the cited project. The person was further asked to describe how s/he would help to reconcile disputants following an interpersonal conflict.

In addition, VPC members were asked to provide information on any three associations, clubs or societies where each peace committee member currently belongs. In doing so, members were asked to describe the aims of the club, association or groups that they belonged to. After completing this data form each VPC member was required to print his/her name and make a declaration before inserting a signature and a date (see Appendix 14). The data form was written in Shona language for ease of understanding by all members of the VPC. The form was designed in such a way that it could be filled by anyone with the ability to read and write. The information required could be provided by any member of the community because it was dealing with everyday life activities as described already. For that reason, it was possible for every member of the VPC to fill it up even without the assistance of any member of the PAG. There are no age limits particularly for adults, that is, those individuals that have attained 18 years of age.

In other words, any VPC member who has attained 18 years or more was eligible to complete the form. The forms are kept by the WPC secretary.

Regarding the creation of VPCs, the PAG had put in place some measures to ensure that there were no parallel peace committee structures in the villages. The major one was that the responsibility to set up of VPC structures was given to the village assemblies which are headed by the village heads suggesting that the VPC was to be automatically owned by the host village. The PAG noted that VPCs were not unique structures at village level as there are already VIDCOs which were set by village assemblies, thus the PAG had no intention to deviate from this norm of loading over the responsibility to the village assemblies to put VPCs.

The PAG always heavily relied on the work of the village assemblies regarding the procedures and processes used for setting up VPCs as there were no available manual to provide guidelines on how VPCs should be put in place except that the PAG recommended a seven member committee for each VPC. The

PAG pledged that it was going to come up with a peacebuilding constitution which should serve as a framework for procedures for creating VPCs. The peacebuilding constitution was written on 6 April and 22 July 2015 respectively, well after VPCs have been established.

Overall, the PAG agreed that a VPC should be created under the direct involvement and participation of the village assembly and where necessary some members of the WPC could come in to support but not to take the lead as this may undermine ownership of the VPC by the host community.

7.4.3 Results from reflections on village sensitization tours

This section presents reflections by the PAG after village sensitization tours. The purpose of the tour was to sensitize villages to set up VPCs. Each VPC was to have seven members and these villages were sensitized during village tours between 10, 17 and 24 February 2015 in which 16 villages were outreached. On 4 March, 2015, the PAG reflected on sensitization tours. In their reflections, the PAG made these conclusions:

- It was good that we were introducing ourselves to the villagers; we also had the opportunity to make ourselves and our peacebuilding programme known to the villagers. What needs improvement is the fact that next time all the 15 members of the WPC should go on the tour, not just five of them as happened in this case.
- The committee has not yet done anything concrete such as buying ball point pens. All we have done so far is to promise to help buy cement for the ward centre. So please let's produce something concrete as a starting point, a record of what we are doing and for people to receive us well.

Reflections by the PAG showed that out of the 16 villages only five villages had set up a VPC by 4 March 2015: *Chanakira, Chikambi, Marimbi, Matambo* and *Munjoma*. Villages that promised but have not yet done so were *Chimbindi, Mandoga, Seve* and *Tapera* and others were still to be contacted. In trying to identify possible reasons for other villages taking time to set up VPCs to date, the following conclusions were made that:

- We do not expect all villages to accept the peacebuilding programme at the same time because some adopt a wait and see strategy;
- Many people take time to accept new programmes, so we should remain hopeful;
- Some refuse the programme outright, so we should proceed without them;
- Some were slow in building the committees because they still do not understand the programme and therefore still need time to think about it;

In view of the above, the WPC suggested that the secretary should continue to encourage villages through telephone calls to consider setting up VPCs. The overriding view was that the WPC should also be

prepared to visit villages that request more information on the programme and provide it fully as some may think that the WPC wants to take their money, they want to see other villages with VPCs first.

The WPC acknowledged that although some villages did not set up VPCs, some appear genuine and others not. Further, they emphasized that there was need to investigate whether or not the villagers fully understand the peacebuilding programme, especially considering that only five out of the 16 villages managed to set up VPCs, an indication of lack of understanding of the programme. They said a possible explanation is that each of these villages already has a VIDCO which suggests that the VPC was not the first such formation in the village, meaning that the villagers were possibly taking their time. The overall impression was that the WPC should be ready to provide more information to those villages that request it. In that regard, they urged the WPC secretary that he should keep in touch with them on this issue. They concluded that what was encouraging was that the five VPCs that were set up indicated that the WPC did something productive in the ward. To quote them verbatim:

The issue now was what to do with the five already there, because our success or failure with these five will either encourage or discourage the other villages. So we should develop a programme that will help to support these five VPCs.

The WPC, as a result, resolved to provide support to existing VPCs while encouraging other villages to set up their own VPCs.

7.4.4 Results from VPCs' focus groups

The PAG planned support visits to VPCs. These support visits were made on 13 March 2015 to three VPCs namely Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi villages. The goal was to establish first what each member of the committee involved in income generating projects was doing. According to the PAG, having an income generating project whether by individual or groups was going to be their starting point because for the PAG, the aim was not to give VPCs money but to help them with information to start with what is already at their disposal. The PAG therefore emphasized that this is where peacebuilding begins, knowing what the villagers are doing, then, we can help them strengthen what is already there. The PAG further highlighted that they were not there to tell VPCs what to do, but to work with them to build from what is already there. They pointed out that before the WPC could work with VPCs, it was important to know what they were already doing in their villages as individuals or as groups.

The thrust of the support visit by representative members of the PAG was:

We want to know what knowledge each VPC member has concerning their current or previous projects. Knowing what knowledge already exists in the various villages helps in that we will not find ourselves importing the knowledge that the villagers already have and to identify gaps in knowledge about their projects. We also want to know what skills each of the various members of the VPC have in resolving conflicts. Since conflict is an inevitable part of life which cannot be avoided, we also want to know what conflict resolution skills are available among the various members of the villages.

Of the five villages that established peace committees, the PAG purposively sampled three namely Chanakira, Chikambi and Marimbi villages. Members of the PAG conducted a focus group with each of the selected VPCs in their host villages.

Chanakira VPC focus group: When asked what projects they were doing in their villages, all participants responded that rearing traditional chickens were the most common projects in the village. One project has three members, the other has two members. There was one member who pointed out that he runs a tuck-shop. They pointed out that there are *Mukando* schemes which involve 10 members, all of whom are women. They indicated that there is also an orphanage run by members of one family.

When asked about the aims of each of the projects, those rearing chickens indicated that they are meant to improve the quality of life through sales and table meat. They also pointed out that *Mukando* scheme was aimed at improving the lives of household members as well as meeting school fees and general up-keep. One female member involved in the *Mukando* scheme when asked how *Mukando* scheme is run, she said:

We contribute \$5 per person every week. We loan out the money so collected to the members at an interest. After eight weeks we collect all the money and buy farming inputs such as seed and fertilizer.

Overall, it was found out that projects by members of Chanakira VPC are aimed at raising their quality of life and general up-keep. This summarizes the aims of all the projects in Chanakira. When asked on reconciling individuals in conflict, the overriding view was that disputants should be encouraged to dialogue with each other in order to come up with a mutually satisfying solution to a conflict.

Chikambi VPC focus group: In trying to find out what projects members of the VPC are involved with, we found out that most of them were into market gardening, they had joined *Mukando* scheme and they work in groups. For example, one group has five members (three men and two women); another also has five (three women and 2 two men). Market gardening was explained by one of the members of the VPC as “growing crops for sale each season”. They pointed out that the aim of market gardening was to generate money as a way of improving lives.”

Another project was *Mukando* scheme with 40 members involving both women and men. One member described this scheme as “loaning out money at an interest.” Overall, market gardening and *Mukando* are some of the ways in which the villagers are forging togetherness, friendship, mutual assistance and development amongst themselves.

On reconciling adversaries, one member of the VPC said that if people are involved in a dispute:

You take them aside, sit them down, listen to their stories and dialogue with them until they reconcile. If their problem is hunger or anything to do with material resources, you advise them to join project groups such as *Mukando* scheme so as to overcome hunger in their family.

The popular view was that disputes could be a result of a shortage of resources, so income generating projects can help to bring unity and maintain good relationships among people. Many members of the Chikambi VPC are also members of other diverse associational groupings including Child Protection Unit, burial societies, Population Services, Viri Microfinance and different political parties. All these are potential peacebuilding stakeholders in Chikambi village.

Marimbi VPC focus group: Villagers in Marimbi are involved in various projects. For example, they are engaged in a *Mukando* scheme. They pointed out that there is a group involving 44 members (39 women and five men), another with 20 members (15 women and five men) and yet another with 10 female members. The aim of the first group was to raise the standard of living of the members, that of the second was to help each other buy farming inputs, and that of the third group was to improve the livelihoods of its members.

Other projects found in the village are rearing small livestock such as rabbits which was done by five people (three women and two men). The aim of the project was to generate income as well as table meat. There was also a one-man rabbit project and the aim of the project was to raise his living standard. Another project involved buying and selling school uniforms. Another member runs a tuck shop. The overriding view was that these projects were aimed at improving the quality of life of households.

In assessing their knowledge and skills on conflict resolution among VPC members, we found out that most of the members have sufficient knowledge and skills in conflict resolution. The main issue that emerged in the discussions was that all disputes should be resolved through dialogue. The overriding view was that dialogue was the key tool for resolving disputes. Overall, it is clear that in all the three villages, VPCs members are running projects of various kinds. The overriding aims are to raising standards of living, that is, improvements of livelihoods. In other words, these villages are building their

own peace by striving to reduce problems of hunger and improving their lives. These are important factors in peacebuilding.

There are many different associations in these villages which include football clubs and burial societies. This also shows that these members are also members of diverse groups in the village. Working in groups is a sign that people can help each other and work together in harmony. Peacebuilding is easier among people who are already organised into groups as is the case in these villages.

7.5 Results from stories of real-life experiences of LPCs

This section unpacks themes that emerged from real-life experiences on the setting up of LPCs in story form, with an view to establish whether and under what conditions informal LPCs can be effective peacebuilding mechanisms. Through these narratives I hope to provide to readers of this document an understanding of the various experiences of peacebuilding initiatives at village levels in Zimbabwe. The narrators were coded as NARR. 0001; 0002; 0003; 0004; 0005; 0006 and 0007.

NARR.0001 was a programmes manager of a peacebuilding organization since 2008 with a peacebuilding organization in Mutare district, Manicaland province. During his tenure as programmes manager, he facilitated the establishment of peace committees in three districts: District 1, District 2 and District 3. In May 2014, he founded a peacebuilding initiative called *Holistic Peace & Development Zimbabwe*. This initiative aims to empower community and develop their capacity for conflict transformation and development. NARR.0001 studied theology and Community Development, Peace & International Relations. He is the author of '*Building Peace in the Horn of Africa*.' He belongs to the Manyika ethnic grouping in the south-eastern part of Zimbabwe. He established a peacebuilding initiative in 2014 which is still functional. He works with communities in Mutare city and surrounding areas in Manicaland province.

NARR.0001 experienced the creation of peace committees as a mammoth task in that he felt that facilitators should act in a nonpartisan manner before, during and after the establishment of a peace committee in order to gain respect of all the parties involved. He also felt that community participation in the selection of peace committee members should be prioritized. This would provide an opportunity for accountability and acceptance of the peace committee in the host community. The fact that he learnt from experience that there are conflicts that are beyond the magnitude of peace committees made him realize that peace committees are temporary structures. Owing to the kind of reception that he received from the ward councillor, he not only experienced a sense of success but also gained confidence in existing and

established structures such as police, traditional leadership and political parties. These existing structures are largely responsible for securing buy-in and project interest, formation of grassroots sectors, gender equity, and the functions of peace committees as provisional structures (for a full story on his experiences, see Appendix 7).

NARR.0002: Mr. Samuel Maruta is a Karanga from Masvingo province which lies on the southern part of Zimbabwe. He is the founder and director of the Southern Institute of Peacebuilding and Development, an academic-cum-practitioner organisation whose mission is to build sustainable community peacebuilding infrastructures in Zimbabwe in particular and southern Africa in general. His organisation is based in Harare, Zimbabwe. He works with communities in Harare province and surrounding areas, mainly rural and urban Shona communities. He founded a peacebuilding initiatives in 2008 which are still operational (for his full story see Appendix 7).

Maruta (Narr.0002) reported that “the last two decades or so, efforts have been directed at building local peacebuilding structures in conflict-ridden and conflict-prone communities in many parts of the world.” This has further given some communities in Zimbabwe a sense of confidence in these structures, since the narrator pointed out that in Zimbabwe, peace clubs have been set up the last decade and half. He went on to say that “these structures are formed either as a reaction to a particular conflict, in which case their main purpose is to contribute to the management of the conflict and to post-conflict peacebuilding.” It was apparent from this narrative that members of these structures are ordinary people and they:

have access to people and situations in the community that outsiders would not have... they can link the process with a cross-section of the community, both vertically to include the top echelons, ordinary residents and everybody in between, and horizontally across all social divisions.

Maruta felt that a peace club is based in the community and is there all the time, meaning that “members of the community have access to it almost as and when a need arises.” Owing to these merits, this narrator was optimistic that peace clubs can effectively handle conflicts at community level. Consequently, based on his experiences of peace clubs, he felt that “peace clubs often do not have the capacity to deal directly with political level conflicts. This limitation is especially noticeable during election time when political polarisation in communities takes centre stage.” Nevertheless, Maruta is hopeful that “Compared to peacebuilding projects run directly by an external agency, a local peace club is relatively less expensive.”

Further, he expressed optimism that:

When it comes to local protocol, local peace clubs are the best. This involves liaising with the local authorities and other organisations working in the area, mobilising participants from among the local population, and organising venues and supplies among other things. Members of the local peace clubs know who to contact and when, and the procedures to follow in order to get the best results.

To that end, he marvelled at some external agencies that exploit local peace clubs to their own advantage, because they hide “the in-kind contributions of the local peace clubs, or the numerous hours of donkey work put in by their members, from the project accounts which nevertheless reflect large sums of money not actually spent.” He also felt that while ownership and sustainability of peace clubs at community level “might happen of its own accord, often it has to be planned for and built into the process at the formation stage.” This narrator felt that ownership and sustainability is made possible by the fact that “every going-on gets to be known by everyone around, not least the village head.” Further, the narrator felt that peace clubs possessed exceptional opportunities such as:

the more the peace club works in the community, with the community and for the community, the more the community co-owns its work and is predisposed to carry it forward with or without the participation and/or support of the external agency that might have initiated it.

As a result, Maruta felt that a peace club project is neither affected by extreme availability or lack of donor funds, meaning that this narrator felt hopeful about community-based peace clubs. Even though this narrator expressed optimism about peace clubs, he cast a shadow on inclusivity of peace clubs as a guarantee for the club itself to be at peace with itself. Rather, he felt that much depends on the composition and internal dynamics of the peace club. With respect to composition, he felt that it is the calibre of people that make up the club, in terms of individual personality, status in the community, level of education and degree of maturity among others, which should be of priority, on one hand. On the other hand, internal dynamics of the peace club depends on the preparedness of individuals to work together, to which the club itself is at peace with itself. Owing to these critical factors, he advised that:

Thus at the formation stage of the club, a lot of attention and effort must be expended in selecting the right calibre of would-be members of the club, and educating them on the vision and mission of the club and the nature of its work before taking them in.

By and large, Maruta felt that the concept of peace club “has the potential to reach every community in every corner of the country” (for a full story of his experiences, see Appendix 7).

NARR.0003: Narr.0003 is a councillor of Makwarimba ward 5 in Wedza district, Mashonaland east province and is the chairperson of the WPC. She said her ward has 68 village heads. In her experiences of setting up a WPC, she said:

I have 68 village heads under me. Each village head has two standing structures, namely VIDCOs and WADCOs. WADCO works with the ward councillor. So I called for an information meeting with all village heads and their WADCO to a meeting in preparation for the setting up of a WPC after the CPMRT sensitization workshop.

She said, in her Ward, all the 68 village heads automatically became members of the peace committee but went on to say that, she instructed village heads to co-opt two members from their VIDCOs to serve in a WPC and she said, the total number became 126 people. According to her, the 126 are committee members but there is an executive committee comprising of seven members. Further on, she said that as the chair, she was planning to establish VPCs. In summation, she said that she plans to mobilize village heads and the WPC to facilitate the establishment of VPCs in all the 68 villages under her ward.

NARR.0004: Narr.0004 is a peace committee member of Igava ward 7, Marondera east district in Mashonaland east province. In his narrative on procedures for setting up a WPC, he said it was after the CPMRT sensitisation workshop that a WPC was established. He said this peace committee comprises of the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, treasurer and committee members. During the process of setting up a WPC, trained participants started by identifying the various sectors and groups such as village heads, youth groups, government departments, and politicians. He said, these sectors were selected indiscriminately – without looking at their political or religious persuasions. He noted that the chairperson of the WPC is the Agricultural extension officer. He stressed that the WPC employed the self-selection process in that individuals volunteered themselves into different positions. He said the selection process was coordinated by the ECLF district focal person.

Regarding the mobilization of stakeholders, he said the district focal person tasked some members of the community to mobilize ordinary people from different communities in ward 7. Further, the councillor mobilized all the influential people such as war veterans, head teachers, and politicians. On the day of the selection of the WPC, initially the proceedings were presided over by the councillor who heralded to everyone who was present that the purpose was to set up a WPC but later on he handed the baton to the district focal person to preside over the selection of the WPC.

He highlighted that the WPC was established three weeks after the CPMRT sensitisation workshop and it comprise of seven members. He acknowledged that the WPC has not been functional because they have

not been able to convene any meeting since it was established. He went on to say that the WPC has never met to convene a formal meeting ever since September 2014 when the WPC was established. He however, acknowledged that occasionally the WPC had managed to teach about peace whenever an opportunity availed itself, especially in public meetings. He even mentioned that every time when members of the WPC liaised with the councillor, they were slotted in to preach peace messages at public gatherings such church meetings, agricultural forums, ward assemblies or village assemblies. In closing, he said monthly meetings have not been conducted to date but was hopeful that after the inter-WPC get together, something good is expected to come through.

NARR.0005: Narr.0005 is a WPC member in Chigodora ward, Wedza district in Mashonaland east province. When asked how the WPC in Chigodora ward was put in place, he said:

it was after we had undergone a CPMRT sensitization workshop between 10, 11 and 12 October 2014 and on the last day of the workshop a pool of peace committee members, 17 in total were appointed under the instrumentality of the district focal person. After a while, we conducted elections to set up an executive peace committee which comprised of seven members.

Further, he said, after setting up a WPC with seven members, they have since sent messages to village heads in the ward to prepare the ground work to set up of WPCs. He said, they have done much in terms of projects but after listening to how other WPCs are performing, he said he felt challenged and empowered by the LPCs' meeting that had brought seven different WPCs to share their experiences. He seemed hopeful that they were now going to invite the ward assembly and then plan the way forward in terms of income-generating projects. He noted that although the chief and the councillor are not in the executive WPC, they were supportive of every activity involving the setting up of a WPC. He said they always attend ward assembly meetings and the WPC has always been slotted time to preach peace messages during ward assembly meetings and even in other public gatherings. He emphasized that the ward assembly was a very important forum because it involves all ward stakeholders who include teachers, police officers, traditional leaders, religious leaders, ordinary members and Agricultural officers to name but a few. He then said that he now understands peacebuilding not only as conflict resolution but also as a process involving projects and schemes such as *Mukando* schemes which other WPCs are involved in. In summation, he seemed to be hopeful that their WPC will adopt and introduce *Mukando* scheme in order to improve livelihoods. Overall, he understood *Mukando* scheme as an important peacebuilding component at village level and that it was something which they had never realized before.

NARR.0006: Narr.0006 is a minister of religion and a CPMRT facilitator under ECLF and is resident in Unit H of Seke, Chitungwiza. He is a committee member of the peace committee in Chitungwiza. When asked how the peace committee was put in place in 2014, he said:

We were at a CPMRT sensitisation workshop comprising of various stakeholders from Ministry of Youth, Women's Affairs, President's Office, the District Administrator's office, ministers of religion and other members of the community who resident in the same area.

Further, he said on the last day of the workshop after it had come to a close, facilitators concluded with the words that they had done their part to train them in peace issues, it was now up to trained participants to decide what to do with the knowledge that they have acquired. NARR.0006, stressed that the 20 participants that had been trained expressed the desire to have a committee that could help to sustain the peace programme since they had demonstrated that this programme was worth taking it further. He said that participants developed the desire to carry on the peace programme because during the course of the workshop, it was declared that peace should continue. He highlighted that, following this request, facilitators of the CPMRT offered some advice on the structure that it should have a chairperson, deputy, secretary, treasurer and committee members. He said that facilitators stressed that the chairperson should be someone who is neutral meaning someone who is not a political activist.

Further on, he said, facilitators emphasized that a chairperson should not be someone who belong to political party A or political party B as this may cause other members belonging to a different party to feel left out. He said, facilitators hinted that since ECLF is founded on Christian values they encouraged ministers of religion to take the chairperson's position and then members of political parties should be wings around the minister of religion.

He said, after this hint, most of the people that were present identified the two ministers of religion who were present to take on the position of chairperson. He pointed out that it was these two that were nominated to contest for this critical position and one of them was elected as chairperson, another as deputy. In summation, he said, the process was guided and owned by the 20 participants in that they used methods of selection that they were familiar with. Overall this committee comprised of all participants who attended meaning that it was made up of 20 members.

NARR.0007: Narr.0007 is a youth worker in Chikambi village and is a member of Chikambi VPC which was established in February 2015 in Ward 8 following a village tour by the WPC. When asked how the peace committee was put in place, he said the village head was the one who presided over the setting up of a VPC. He said, the village head asked whether there were individuals who were volunteering to be

members of the VPC. He observed that at first individuals did not respond but later on the village head asked the secretary of the village assembly whether he was willing. When asked, the secretary of the village assembly demonstrated willingness by raising his hand and the rest of the members raised their hands. Further, he said, the secretary of the village assembly was elected by the entire village assembly as the chairperson and the narrator was elected to the position of secretary. Other members that were selected include the treasurer and four committee members and the whole committee was put in place.

7.6 Chapter summary

Results that emerged from in-depth interviews showed that peace was popularly understood as a precondition for community development. Community development was construed as the coming together of individuals into groups in order to address challenges affecting their well-being through income generating projects. The overriding view was that peacebuilding involves the capacity by villages to promote peaceful co-existence, resolving conflicts through dialogue, working in groups and running of income generating projects.

Results from participant observations showed that human behaviour is an important variable in peacebuilding processes which need to be interpreted in its context in order to come up with an appropriate intervention. It was also observed that the majority of women involved in the *Mukando* scheme are in fact promoting peace in that they were addressing the problem of hunger, household food necessities such as salt, sugar, and mealie-meal and meeting their children's school fees. Owing to the *Mukando* scheme the majority of women acknowledged that friction related to money for sugar, salt and school fees at home were significantly reduced.

Also, results from the analysis by the PAG, showed that the village sensitization tours made a great impact in that some villages responded by putting in place VPCs. The fact that the WPC gave the responsibility to village assemblies to set up VPCs was a welcome standpoint which helped villages to own the process and therefore it enhanced the legitimacy of VPCs. Results from VPC focus groups showed that villagers in Chanakira, Chikambi and Marambi were building peace through income-generating projects which involves rearing traditional chickens, Mukando schemes, market gardening among others. The overriding view was that these income-generating projects were in fact helping to mitigate conflict situations that are associated with hunger, poverty and shortage of school fees. Overall these projects were helping villagers to work in groups and to promote cohesion. Also, it emerged that when a conflict occurs, disputants should be encouraged to consider dialoguing in order to achieve a mutually satisfying solution to the conflict. Results from narratives showed that the establishment of

informal LPCs by villages was seen as a response to challenges affecting communities. Since peacebuilding was seen as the core of peace committees in the villages, the concept of peacebuilding was understood as involving building of relationships and the improvement of livelihoods. These results were discussed in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major themes around the concept of peace, peacebuilding and informal peace committees. The identification of themes was made possible through the use of a coding system (see Appendix 10) designed for purposes of this study. The theme of peace was perceived as a precondition for development. Development was understood as having enough food to eat at the household level. Within this framework, the overriding view on peacebuilding was that it involves building relationships and the improvement of livelihoods through low-cost entrepreneurial activities. On the theme of informal LPCs, the overriding view was that they are a response mechanism by villagers to address peace challenges affecting their communities. However, the major challenge associated with informal LPCs was the lack of legitimacy in that they were not officially recognized by the GoZ because currently there is no legislation that authorises and acknowledges their existence. The NPRC which represents Zimbabwe's current peacebuilding blueprint on national healing and reconciliation is silent on LPCs. In spite of these challenges, it emerged that informal LPCs have made a marked difference in that communities have tended to be inward-looking in terms of addressing peace challenges affecting their well-being. This initiative by villages bred a new model for the establishment of informal peace committees in local communities. The model is called "self-selection" because it is premised on the idea that members of the community who share similar concerns and aspirations come together for purposes of establishing structures comprising of men, women and youth. The overriding view on informal LPC is that they have proved to be capable of addressing peace challenges affecting their well-being, thus, demystifying the notion that addressing peace challenges is a preserve of incumbent governments. Fundamentally, informal LPCs have become instrumental in bringing members of the village together to talk about their peace aspirations.

8.2 Peace

The concept of peace stood out as the most prevalent theme that repeatedly emerged in the current study. The overriding view was peace plays a very important role in the lives of people and the survival of communities. It was perceived as a precondition for development. Stakeholders in this study understood development as having sufficient food for the family and the existence of an enabling environment for individual and groups to carry out their normal activities such as tilling the fields and tending one's garden without any disruption. McCandless (2007, p.93) emphasizes that in Africa, "peace is measured by

the well-being of the individual and his/her community... sees peace and development as intimately related.” The link between peace and development was emphasized again by stakeholder 2 who remarked that:

In our day-to-day living there is nothing of benefit to everyone that can be achieved if peace does not exist. So the creation of an environment conducive for peace is the fulcrum of anything such as food production activities or building schools and without peace I do not see us achieving any of these in our communities because if a country is undergoing a war situation no child can go to school, neither can parents plant in the fields. Nevertheless, if there is peace all these activities are made possible and therefore not beyond the reach of many people. Thus, everything that we may desire to achieve can only be achievable when there is peace.

This man seems to suggest the three dimensions that underlie peace as explained by OECD (2005, p.2). The first is that peace has a security dimension meaning that where peace exists, personal insecurities resulting from hunger, poverty and conflict are done away with, making it possible for people to carry on with their own normal day-to-day duties without feeling threatened. This state of affairs was alluded to by stakeholder 2, 4 and 5 when they said peace creates conditions for a safe environment.

The second is the economic dimension of peace which suggests that in an environment where there is peace, individuals can start projects and achieve the desired results. The idea that peace has an economic dimension was strongly believed by stakeholders in this study. For example, stakeholder 4 remarked that:

when I look at it, if we do not have peace in our communities, I do not see us achieving anything because without peace people cannot come together to plan and to work out their plans in order to produce results.

Third was the creation of institutions that support peace- a peace committee is a classic example of institutionalized peace at local or national level. This view advocates that communities and governments should create mechanisms that support peace, since peace is understood as a precondition for development.

Taken together, the three dimensions - security, economic and institutional support for peace- endorse the notion that peace is an indispensable fulcrum of development. By emphasizing that peace is a precondition for development, this study places the task to villages in Zimbabwe to create WPCs and VPCs. In other words, it is not only the responsibility of the GoZ to create an environment for development to take place. Individuals and villages share this responsibility too, to promote peace in their communities. Maruta (2008, p.8) has this to say, “...unless we do these things for ourselves, nobody will come and do them for us, and we will continue to wallow in self-annihilating conflict, marginalisation and poverty”. Villages that have created peace committees have in fact demonstrated that by taking responsibility for their own peace they are creating peace for themselves. By the time of writing of this

report, some villages in Ward 8 had created VPCs and they were coming together, improving their livelihoods through income generating activities such as farming, bee keeping, gardening or poultry among other, entrepreneurial activities. Thus, by engaging in income generating projects to address hunger and securing school fees for children, by advising individuals in conflict to consider dialoguing and running *Mukando* schemes at village level and any other low-cost entrepreneurial activities, individuals in Ward 8 were in fact creating peace in the village. To create peace means that individuals must prioritize peace, thus giving peace a chance in their villages. These income generating activities supports the view that peace is not beyond reach, that is, to say peace is achievable.

Although peace is achievable, the overriding view was that peace does not just come about on itself. It requires initiatives, participation and involvement of every individual or groups. Stakeholders in this study emphasized that it is the responsibility of every individual, household or community/village to be at peace with each other. The general understanding as espoused by stakeholders in this study was that the survival of any individual, group, household or community/village from the scourge of conflict and violence is linked to how each of these entities responds to the peacebuilding call. Without initiatives and participation by individuals and communities, people are not building peace at all (Maruta, 2008, p.4). Stakeholder 1, felt very strongly about peace initiatives when she said that:

Community dynamics keeps on changing every now and then. And so, a community will never reach a state of equilibrium because social harmony keeps on disrupted. If it's a rural community my stray cow can eat in the neighbour's field, that is, a breakdown of social harmony...The way you are going to handle the breakdown of social harmony, especially the person whose field has been eaten by a neighbour's stray cow and the owner of the cow, will determine whether we will come back to a state of social harmony.

This assertion depicts that although social harmony is the desired status quo, it is always fluid. The fluctuations of social harmony at village level or anywhere else call for initiatives to help maintain a balance of social harmony through interventions. However, stakeholder 2 pointed out that in rural areas when social harmony has been disrupted, restoration of harmony often involves recourse through household arbitrators or the village head. The use of household or community structures such as *matare emhosva* to resolve conflict is what is understood in the current study as peace initiatives. The creation of VPCs is another classic example of peace initiatives bent on enhancing the notion that peace does not just come about on its own, it does not fall from heaven but requires group efforts and cooperation in creating peace. Before the creation of VPCs in Ward 8, we found out that there were already VIDCOs and WADCOs which were aimed at promoting development at grassroots level. All these structures fall within the category of locally-based initiatives which are meant to address problems affecting local communities.

Although the overriding view was that peace is achievable, stakeholders in this study could not come up with a universal definition on the concept of peace. Chivasa and Mutswanga (2014, p.123) contend that peace has to do with the diversity of people which suggests that it is not possible to come up with a universal definition for the concept of peace. However, stakeholders in this study were able to identify culture specific terms and phrases associated with peace and these descriptions have to do with their experience of peace in their villages in Seke. The phrases for peace were:

- Living together in harmony,
- Getting along well together,
- Having good relationships

The most frequent standard definition of peace that the majority of stakeholders talked about was living together along with peaceful co-existence and social harmony.

8.2.1 Living together (*kugarisana zvakanaka*)

There are two strands that stood out on the concept of living together. The first strand as understood by stakeholder 3 showed that: “Living together means that people have adequate resources which they can use for their day to day survival.” Stakeholder 3 is a strong adherent of the livelihood component as a precondition for people to live together. Thus, this stakeholder believes that peace exists if people have improved standards of living. Stakeholder 2 viewed living together in a slight different way. For stakeholder 2:

Living together means self control for example when something undesirable occurs; people need to accept such an occurrence as part of everyday life to prevent people from fighting. If one does not control himself but begins to say *ha-a* why has such a thing happened I want to seek out the person who did it. Such a reaction often gives birth to arguments which results in fighting. So living together is sustained when individuals begin to say squabbles and misunderstandings are part of everyday life which should be addressed through dialogue.

The proposition by stakeholder 2 indicates that she is a firm believer that ‘*kugarisana*’ is sustained by an attitude and behaviour characterized by tolerance and dialogue. This view is strongly supported by Chimuka (2009, p.10) who defines ‘*kugarisana*’ as, “Accommodating the various differences amongst people of the same community. Even in terms of wrongdoing, ‘*kugarisana*’ involved the realization that to err is human and that one could also be in the wrong someday somehow, hence the need for tolerance.”

The cardinal point of ‘*kugarisana*’ is an acknowledgement that to err is human. Stakeholder 5 made similar points that:

Living together in harmony means that individuals live without fighting, without stealing from each other and also preventing straying domestic animals from eating in the fields or gardens. If at all a stray animals enters into the fields, villagers should find a way of addressing such situations without fighting knowing that tomorrow the victim can turn out to become an offender.

Stakeholder 5 indicates acceptance of the philosophy that conflict is a fact of everyday life as explained by Chivasa and Mutswanga (2014, p.685-6), and that Shona people do accept conflict as a fact of life as evidenced by their ability to come up with various terms and phrases that describes conflict. Thus, to err is human is not meant to condone the behaviour of the wrong doer; rather, it denotes acceptance and acknowledgement of the realities of life that mistakes are common in human species.

When applied to conflict, to err is human is suggestive of the fact that conflict is inevitable. This notion was vindicated strongly by stakeholders at CPMRT sensitization workshops between 15, 16 and 17 May 2013 and LPCs capacity building workshops run by ECLF on 12 and 13 February 2015. In all these workshops, the popular theme was that conflict is not an antithesis of peace. The emphasis was that as individuals and group share the same space and resources they often discover that people see things differently. Participants at this workshop concurred that conflict should be considered normal because life was created that way. To exemplify that differences are very basic, one participant said: “we have two eyes, two ears, two hands, two legs and so on... that is left and right meaning there are different sides, two different entities in life which non-of us can change but we just have to accept things as they are in order to appreciate life.” Thus, there was general consensus that in order to cope with the differences and appreciate the blessing of living together, as another participant remarked, *‘Ati mhiripiri inonaka ngaadye mhiripiri yake, ati suga inonaka ngaatapirirwe mhiripiri yake. Kwete kurwira kuti chinonaka ndechechipi’* (he who likes hot chilli should enjoy hot chilli, he who enjoys sugar should enjoy it and not to fight over what is the sweetest ingredient between hot chilli and sugar). From these sentiments, the overriding view was that individuals and groups should be prepared to swallow the bitter pill of wanting to change those people who view life differently from them because people will always differ in the way they think and behave. Thus, all stakeholders in this study seemed to suggest that the cardinal aspect of living together is tolerance between individuals and groups. This study, therefore argues that in order to live together people should always accept and tolerate each other regardless of their differences because this is part of life and that way peace can be created and realized.

Although tolerance is proving a challenge, this study adds weight to propositions by stakeholders that living together means that individuals and groups must find ways of living at peace with those who differ with them in terms of views and ways of life. Thus, to be different as this study found out is the reality of life and therefore people should not fight over their differences but live together in cordial harmony. Cordial harmony does not suggest agreement or subscribing to one particular view point, it suggests the ability to accept that people are different and that they should co-exist. For people to co-exist, tolerance should be embraced. In other words, what is needed in order to get along and have good relationships

between people is to develop coping mechanisms such as forgiving each others' wrongs and reconciling with each other short of which tolerance can be difficult if not impossible. This means if people tolerate each other only then can they be able to get along and have good relations without threatening or causing harm on each other in their villages. In part, this is what it means to be at peace with each other as well as living together.

Fundamentally, people should tolerate each other in order to live together. A classic example of living together was observed in Chanakira village in Ward 8 during support visits to VPCs on 13 March 2015. This village is comprised of Tonga people who have lived among the Shona for several decades. Some members of the PAG had the opportunity to interact with the Chanakira village head and the VPC. In our discussion with them, life seemed normal to live among the Shona dominated area suggesting that they co-existed peacefully with Shona people, though some conflicts, like any other community were occasionally experienced. The fact that Chanakira family has its own village head who is Tonga shows that they are respected as a minority community among the dominant Shona people in Mashonaland east province. This in turn shows that they can build relationships on their own, can build unity, helping each other in diverse ways and working together as a family. People of this village are unique because it is their village of origin, meaning that it is one family that stayed in one place and expanded into a village. When asked which Shona sub-group they belonged to, they pointed out that they were Tonga, meaning that they are not originally Shona unlike those of Zezuru, Manyika, Karanga, Ndaou or Korekore origin. Nonetheless, these people live in the same way as the Shona in that they operate in groups and that they are involved in activities aimed at raising their standard of living and that of other members of the village.

Within the Chanakira VPC is one Shona person who lives among them. We did not manage to ask him/her when he/she started living in the area, as a Karanga from Masvingo province among the Tonga. But in looking closely at how they live and the fact that they managed to build a VPC that includes a Karanga shows that there is co-existence in the village. Chetkew-Yanoov (1999, p.26, 56) points out that co-existence means the capacity by homogenous/heterogeneous group to live side by side in peaceful interdependence within the same boundaries. He says, in order to co-exist, individuals and groups should embrace trust, self-confidence, open and frequent communication. This idea seems to be the case in Chanakira village, in that since most of the people in the ward are Shona, that there is a pocket of Tonga people among them and with their own village indicates co-existence between the two groups in the ward. This good neighbourliness and working together in harmony is the fulcrum of peacebuilding in Ward 8 of Seke District.

The key factor for living together suggested by the results is tolerance. Chetkow-Yanoov (1999, p.20) defines tolerance using an analogy from engineering. He defines tolerance as “how much a specific kind of metal might bend back and forth before it breaks or shatters into pieces.” When applied to human communities it relates to acceptance of differences and respecting those individual differences. Stakeholder 4 remarked that: “Peace means living together in harmony as people who are neighbours in the village and surrounding communities tolerating each other.” This study argues that tolerance is a key component for communities to live together as it helps individuals and groups to cope with their differences and to be able to shun fighting while embracing differences as strengths rather than threats. As is evident in this study, what is key for people to live together, to experience cordial harmony and to have good relations in their villages is tolerance between individuals and groups.

8.2.1.1 The-yet-peace and not-yet-peace thesis

In view of the foregoing discussion, the important question to ask then becomes what is peace? In other words, what does living together, getting along and good relationships suggest about the concept of peace? For example, is peace an event or a process? If peace is an event what kind of event is it or if it is a process what kind of process is it? The theme that peace is an event is strong in literature (Horner, 2013, p.370). Horner believes that peace is an event. In contrast, stakeholder 6 felt strongly that peace is a process not an event. In fact, the majority of stakeholders supported the view that peace is a process.

This seeming paradox was clarified by Horner (2013, p.370) who emphasized that peace is both an event and utopian. From her perspective an event “is that which cannot be contained in language because it will always exceed the historical and cultural spheres.” In that context, she concludes that the term peace is a signifier, a pointer or indicator which serves only to point people to something greater than the term itself. This approach suggested to me that peace cannot just be limited to living together, co-existence and social harmony as understood by Shona people I interacted with throughout this study. In this context, these descriptors of peace by stakeholders in this study are limited in some way because they do not give a full picture of what peace really is if Horner’s (2013) thesis is anything to go by. In other words, peace at the time of my interactions with stakeholders in this study was culture specific in such a way peace was understood as a process not an event. That there is no universal definition of peace was reported in this study. Nevertheless, this study drew from those aspects of peace mentioned by Shona stakeholders in this study which relates to peace as both an event and a process.

Accordingly, every culture understands peace in its unique way and this has to do with people’s particular experience of peace. Reber-Rider (2008, p.87) must have got it right when she said every culture has its

own way of understanding and conceptualizing peace. In short, there is no one particular culture that can claim to have an all encompassing definition of peace for humankind. This view links closely with Horner's (2013, p.371) thesis that peace is not closed but an open-ended phenomenon. Findings from stakeholders in this study support this view strongly that peace is a process which suggests that peace is open-ended. At the time of fieldwork, stakeholders reported that when someone mentions the word peace, images are invoked. As reported in this study, although peace is achievable, it is also a mental construct, a cognitive activity, that is, something that also happens in people's heads.

Lederach (1997, p.20) contend that "peace is a dynamic social construct." This suggests that peace is relative and therefore culture specific as reported in this study. Peace as an open-ended and a social construct seems to suggest that although peace is attainable but still there is a yearning for something better and more fulfilling in future which surpasses and exceeds living together, cordial harmony or good relations in the present or in the now. This seems to be the argument by Horner (2013) when she proposed that peace is an event and *utopian*.

Basing on Horner's thesis of peace, I was inspired to begin to think of peace in two categories. These are: *the-yet-peace* and *the-not-yet-peace*. These phrases are an extension of the Christian eschatological phrase: '*the yet and not yet*' in which the kingdom of God is construed as *the yet kingdom* and *not yet kingdom*. In my theological class in 2004, where I first learnt about *the yet* and *not yet* kingdom, these phrases were made in reference to the kingdom of God in which *the yet kingdom* represented the present, what is experienced in the now or the present positive elements which are a replica of what is to come while *the yet kingdom* was visionary, what might be, futuristic, or a positive state of being, eternal bliss where everyone looks forward to experiencing. Thus, *the yet and not yet kingdom* meant that the kingdom of God was a present reality but not in its fullness.

While this study is not a theological thesis, I have distanced myself to those contextual and eschatological debates surrounding this theological phrase but limited myself to the terminology: '*the-yet* and *not-yet*' itself for purposes of putting peace into two broad categories: *the yet-peace* and *not-yet-peace*. The *yet* and *not yet* phrase provided valuable insight into the model of peace in this study as, *the-yet peace* and *not-yet peace*. It provided insight into the conceptions of peace in this study that living together, getting along and good relationships is peace in the present (*the yet peace*) and while the *not yet peace* far exceeds peace in the present.

As an extension of Horner's argument, what this researcher calls *the-yet peace* is peace in the villages understood in Ward 8 as living together, getting along, cordial harmony or peaceful co-existence. The *not-yet-peace* in this study is more visionary- what might be in the future. In academic discourses, peace has conventionally been classified as negative or positive peace and these concepts have been mutually influential in coming up with *the yet peace* and *not yet peace*. It is therefore very important to say that the negative and positive peace paradigms (McCandless, 2007, p.92) which are currently the ultimate goal of all peace efforts were also instrumental in the development of the *yet peace* and *not yet peace* models.

Negative peace is akin to *the yet peace* model while positive peace is akin to the *not yet peace* model. All humankind is making efforts to achieve the *yet peace* whether as negative peace [absence of physical violence] or the *not yet peace* as positive peace [what is idealized as a good society] (McCandless, 2007, p.92). The creation of VPCs in Ward 8 aims at achieving a good society where every household has sufficient food to eat. Improved livelihoods is a classic example of efforts towards achieving positive peace.

At the village level in Zimbabwe, positive peace relates to concepts such as "calm, harmonious relationships, mutual understanding and compassion" (McCandless, 2007, p.93). This type of peace can be both a present reality and can remain visionary. The majority of stakeholders showed that the means to achieving the elements of positive peace singled out by McCandless include income-generating projects such as the *Mukando* scheme, bee keeping, poultry, vegetable drying among other low-cost entrepreneurial activities. These elements fall within the category of the *yet-peace* for purposes of this study. Thus, the *yet-peace* is a present reality manifesting itself through living together/co-existence, cordial harmony or reconciliation and improved livelihoods. While *the yet-peace* is a reality that has already been achieved, these experiences of peace do not in themselves provide a full picture of what peace is in its fullness because even villages experiencing improved livelihoods, peaceful co-existence or experiencing good relations still yearn for a better peaceful future.

The yearning for something better, a more peaceful village even by those villages considered as peaceful is the point of departure for this study to argue for the *not-yet-peace*. This is the peace that even those villages that are relatively experiencing positive peace continue to yearn for a more peaceful future. Thus, *the yet-peace* and *not-yet-peace* supersedes the positive peace paradigm in that even those that consider themselves to have achieved positive peace, continue to yearn for a much better peaceful world. A review of a sample of Shona terms and phrases associated with the concept of peace reveals significant

differences between what can be experienced as peace (*the-yet-peace*) in the present and visions of peace (*the not-yet-peace*), what might be, as shown in Table 23.

Table 23: The-yet-peace and not-yet-peace in Shona conceptions of peace

Shona terms and phrases associated with peace	Meanings attached by informants	<i>The-yet-peace</i> implications	<i>The-not-yet-peace</i> implications
<i>Kugarisana zvakanaka</i> (living together/co-existence)	A village living together in harmony without fighting, squabbles or crimes being committed; -Having good social relations	-Co-existence, tolerating each other; -Not using vulgar language; -Dialoguing	- A village without conflict; -A village without squabbles; A village without offenders; -No stock theft
<i>Kunzwanana</i> (Getting along well)	-Members of the village living without friction; -sister/brotherhood (love); -Conforming to social norms and values	-Unity between individuals; -Having once accord; -Accommodating one another; -Negotiates whenever a conflict occurs; People cooperate	-No discord in the home; -No deviants in the village or home; -No cruelty between individuals
<i>Runyararo</i> (tranquillity, calmness, equilibrium)	-Individuals staying in harmonious relations without hard feelings against each other;	-Individuals prevent domestic animals from eating in the fields; -If a crime is committed the offender pays compensation	-No crimes are committed; -No stock theft in the village
<i>Rugare</i> (contentment, material well-being, being safe)	-Having resources, food, and other basic necessities; -individuals have pieces of land to produce their own food;	-Having sufficient food to eat everyday in the home; -Having time of happiness; -People sell their commodities	-No disruption of livelihoods; -Everyone is happy; -All people have their needs met
<i>Kuwirirana</i> (One accord)	-Having good relations; -Sister/brotherhood (love)	-individual disagree and reconcile; -individuals respect each other; -individuals carry each other's burdens	-Individuals and groups do not fight each other; -No cruelty amongst people

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

The two categories of peace that are embedded in the Shona concept of peace motivated this study to illustrate how Shona people have developed a mind-set about peace which goes beyond peace in the present. As evident from this study, it seems *the-yet-peace* category is what Shona villages are experiencing now or making efforts to experience which means that this is the kind of peace they are/have

been familiar with over the years. The *not-yet-peace* is the vision of peace, what might be in the future that is their aspirations, future images of peace in Shona villages. Boulding (2001, p.569) states that “positive images of the future act as releasers of social energy in the societies holding such images...” This means that the *not-yet-peace* images help communities to outlive the present realities characterized with agonies and violent conflict into a preferred future. Simply put, these positive images have the potential to generate commitment to achieving a better and peaceful future. This seems to be the argument put forward by Horner (2013) when she brings to the fore that peace is also *utopian*. This study argues that peace is understood as living together, getting along or good relations does exist in Shona villages but not in their fullness. In that case, peace remains *utopian*.

The word *utopian* is taken to mean that this kind of peace is something that happens in people’s minds, it invokes positive mental images that are futuristic, a yearning for something better than the current state of affairs (Boulding, 2001, pp.568-569). In similar thought, stakeholder 6 said something worth pondering:

Personally I think it is very possible to be comfortable within oneself, of course one cannot be fully 100 per cent happy considering the realities of life. Being comfortable or peaceful means coming to terms with life that is being content, accepting the reality of life that life is what it is. Therefore, I will not stop myself from living but I will accept realities of life as they are but determined to improve conditions that hinder life into becoming better. For me that is peace, that is, being content.

For stakeholder 6, although she was of the view that peace is achievable, at one point she said: “coming to a peace state is a continuous process.” She seems to be of the view that peace is like change because she said “peace is like change. Change will always be a process not an event.” In view of this, I have worked with the idea that like change, peace involves coming up with coping mechanisms to foster living together, cordial harmony, reconciliation while at the same time having a forward looking for a better peaceful future. While humankind is hopeful for the *not-yet-peace*, this study argues that communities must come up with mechanisms to sustain the *yet-peace*, peace in the present. The creation of I4P such as LPCs is a classic example of efforts by villages to take responsibility for their own peace and to sustain peace in the present.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, this study argues that the contemporary world has come up with a broader framework for expressing the *yet-peace* and *not-yet-peace* which is popularly known as peacebuilding. Peacebuilding embraces both the *yet-peace* and *not-yet-peace* paradigms as reported in this study. Thus, the processes involving individuals and groups making efforts to address peace challenges through the creation of informal LPCs is peacebuilding by another name.

8.3 Peacebuilding

The concept of peacebuilding has received a fair share in the current study as proposed by the PAG and all stakeholders. The theme of peacebuilding was prevalent from the interview responses, capacity building workshops, observations and group interviews involving stakeholders in Ward 8. It must be said that from these various sources of data the recurring theme was that, in peacebuilding we are not reinventing the wheel, but that we are complementing what is already in place such as household courts, village courts and VIDCOs and WADCOs.

Basing on the theme for peacebuilding by stakeholders I have put peacebuilding into two sub-categories namely; a) peacebuilding as building relationships, b) peacebuilding as the improvement of livelihoods (involving development, capacity building and entrepreneurial activities). Each category represents a school of thought as revealed by various stakeholders in the current study.

Stakeholders who make up peacebuilding as the building relationships school say that peacebuilding concerns building relationships within the family and community. For them, good relations involve being united, restraining each other, giving each other good advice, and reconciling each other in cases of disputes. Further, they said that building relations involves being united that is having the same focus and lightening each other's burden in cases of hardships.

The dominant view by this sub-school was that peacebuilding is to do with harmony and co-existence in the home, the community and surrounding areas. For them, harmony is living together without violence, working together, respecting each other, love and helping each other develop and improve. In respecting each other, they said that each person is treated in accordance with his position in the family whether as the father, the mother and children. Further, they pointed out that everyone who is the age of one's child is your child; if a woman is about the age of one's mother, and then she becomes one's mother. Someone who is older becomes a senior. And so on. From their perspective, this is what makes up cordial harmony at home and community which translates into building relationships between individuals and groups. For them, respect involves treating people equally and that is what helps to build relationships.

Stakeholders who subscribe to peacebuilding as the relationship-building school advocates for the practice of love which is one of the cardinal virtues of relationship-building. These stakeholders describe love as doing good deeds such as taking care of an orphan just like your own child. They also advocate that if someone has a problem and needs help, one should provide it without expecting to be paid; that is where love begins. Further, they said love also includes how you treat other people and the willingness to

help other people who might need it. It is clear from this school that peacebuilding embraces values such as love, respect which breeds cordial harmony, cooperation, co-existence among other peaceable values.

Further, peacebuilding as the relationship-building school stressed, proverbially, peacebuilding is putting up shelter before the rains come so that when the rain comes we prevent loss of life. From their perspective, disputes, disagreements, misunderstandings, and conflicting needs and interests, are the rains that might fall among individuals, homes and community. Building shelter does not prevent rain from coming down, rather it is out of knowledge that one day the rains will come, so we should prepare so that the rains do not destroy our way of life. They emphasized therefore that peacebuilding does not seek to eradicate disagreements among neighbours, villagers or husband and wife, but that when that happens those in conflict should be able to sit down together, identify and analyse the causes of the dispute and try their best to ensure that should another dispute arise in future they do not engage in violence but continue to live together in happiness like human beings, not animals.

Stakeholders belonging to this sub-school of thought strongly believed that if it so happens that people experience disagreements and resort to violence, peacebuilding gives them a chance to engage in constructive dialogue so that they vent out hurt and anger in their hearts and minds. In similar thought, stakeholder 6 was quoted as saying:

A person in dispute should be allowed to speak his/her mind; in that way he/she is healed. So peacebuilding includes being able to speak about one's painful experiences. Having the space to speak freely helps vent out the resentment and hate brought about by conflict. If anything is talked about, it loses its sting. What it means is that peacebuilding involves encouraging people to speak out their grievances so that they can be healed for there to be peace; it also helps that if the same conflict arises again in future, he/she who has successfully spoken out her grievances can live with others in harmony.

This woman strongly believes that peacebuilding is not about naming and shaming each other as is often the trend between some disputants. In peacebuilding, disputants engage each other with a view to dealing with underlying issues of a conflict so that relationships are restored and enhanced to enable people to work together in cordial harmony. Peacebuilding as building relationship sub-school is a reality in Shona communities and elsewhere across the globe. However, this school is not a stand-alone, but when bundled together with the livelihoods school it is enhanced.

Peacebuilding as improvements of livelihoods school was understood as development, capacity-building and entrepreneurship. For this school, development means all people having enough to eat at the same time in the family, the community and surrounding areas, and the eradication of poverty. For them, capacity building involves giving each other ideas and sharing burdens. To exemplify, they said, if one

sees another person having problems s/he should not laugh at him/her; instead, s/he should give him/her all the assistance one can; some day one will also need help when in trouble.

This school stressed that peacebuilding is to do with reducing hardships experienced in the communities such as conflict, hunger and poverty through income-generating projects. Doing projects is one way designed to reduce problems in families and communities. Further, stakeholders highlighted that we use a widely recognised approach where in order to improve the livelihoods of members of the community the starting point is to make sense of resources at their disposal that is what they are already doing whether as income generating projects or any other scheme that they are currently engaged. They argue that what individuals are doing, their expertise and the groups they belong to in the community is a good starting point if people's livelihoods are to be improved.

Stakeholders who subscribe to this school have on several occasions cited *Mukando* and linked it to entrepreneurship and ultimately with peacebuilding. In Ward 8, the *Mukando* scheme is one of the major assets at the disposal of communities there. Most stakeholders mentioned they got to know of *Mukando* scheme through Seke rural cluster association which started in 1998. The association was first created by rural men and women in collaboration with CARE international. The goal was to train women and men in entrepreneurship and the management of the *Mukando* scheme. Subsequently, in 2010, Viri micro-finance took over from CARE to work with Seke rural cluster. Viri micro-finance collaborated with Seke rural cluster group and the goal was to provide technical and financial support to existing groups that were involved in *Mukando* scheme.

Seke rural cluster is a grassroots association in Seke district. A key philosophy of Seke rural cluster is to provide men and women with entrepreneurship and financial management skills to be used in their day-to-day life. In Ward 8, where the current study was conducted, rural women have organized themselves into groups of 10s, 20s, 30s and more, then organized themselves along the *Mukando* scheme. *Mukando* is accessed by more than 500 men and women in Ward 8.

The capacity by men and women to mobilize themselves into groups is an important indicator of how trust, social networks and relationships can assist local community members to take care of their own needs. Trust, social networks and relationships are some of the major assets that contribute to community well-being which is peacebuilding by another name. These assets help individuals and groups within a community to meet their basic needs such as food, addressing conflict issues through engagement as well as embarking on income-generating projects, thus enhancing their livelihoods.

On 7 November 2014, when the ward peacebuilding committee was formed, Seke rural cluster already had groups of *Mukando* and social cohesion has always been a major characteristic feature. A recent development that achieved social cohesion among members of the Ward 8 peacebuilding committee was the writing of the *Mukando* constitution on 27 December 2014 at Ziko tship in Ward 8 of Seke district (see Appendix 11: Revolving loan fund Constitution). Informed by the *Mukando* scheme, Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding committee believed that peace cannot be built on empty stomachs. Their view is echoed by the old Congolese saying which goes: “there is no peace without bread” (Karlysheva, 2014, p.37). Informed by the livelihoods school during their first meeting on 7 November 2014, the WPC members pointed out that there were cases involving individuals in need of food stuffs, school fees for some children, among other support. To address these problems, Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding came up with the idea of starting a *Mukando* scheme. Thus, together these stakeholders started a *Mukando* scheme on 7 November 2014 and the first cycle ran until 30 June 2015 after which members had to start the second cycle which ended in December 2015. The goal of starting a *Mukando* scheme by the peacebuilding committee was to improve the livelihoods of peoples through the provision of food stuffs and school fees and other support.

The underlying principles of the *Mukando* scheme are that community members are able to take care of their own needs by addressing challenges such as hunger, provision of school fees, and construction of houses. These aspects are important to peacebuilding. In a discussion on the effectiveness of *Mukando* scheme with five women during a site visit in Chikambi village on 2 January 2015, they revealed that sustainability depends on cohesion and the group’s ability to implement constitutional rules. They said *Mukando* scheme aims to bring about positive social change through the involvement of stakeholders using local knowledge in that people are able to construct houses; they pay school fees for their children, buy food stuff and embark on income generating projects. They said it provides coordination and collaboration between members of the group, thus enhancing social cohesion-a critical element of peacebuilding.

Overall, they stressed that as a result of the *Mukando* schemes, lives have been transformed and communities have improved their livelihoods as well. SEEP Network (2010, p.5) notes that:

Livelihoods of households and the entire communities have been transformed by the power of members knowing that any time they can call on savings, credit and insurance benefits in a manner that is flexible, appropriate to their situations, and set in an administrative and social culture where they feel understood and valued.

The point is that the *Mukando* scheme is accessible, flexible and locally managed, making it sustainable because members of the village who are familiar with each other are the ones that make up a *Mukando* group and it is often established where cohesion already exists.

Data from this study suggests that peacebuilding is not a far-fetched enterprise. Peacebuilding occurs when villagers are strengthened to work as groups, with one focus, unison in addressing challenges and in utilizing opportunities that avail themselves “as this happens villagers become less vulnerable and more resistant to external exploitative forces, and accordingly, more able to sustain and grow a culture of peace”. The role of ECLF in Ward 8 was to strengthen the assets of local people through CPMRT sensitization workshops. ECLF was a catalyst and as it stands Ward 8 is now able to stand on its feet by taking responsibility of its own peace by embracing the two schools that underpin contemporary peacebuilding.

Data further suggests that villagers have all the resources to build peace, once they cooperate they can withstand pressure from those forces that threaten peace in their communities. For example, in Ward 8, the fact that people in the villages have chickens in the homes, livestock in fields, out of which they produce their own food and are able to address conflict within their scope. These are assets that Ward 8 should continue to utilize in order to take responsibility of their own peace.

Overall, the two schools, peacebuilding as relationship-building and the improvements of livelihoods, as evidence suggests do complement each other. As the Congolese old saying goes ‘peace cannot be built on empty stomach.’ This study was premised on the idea that peacebuilding at community level should embrace these two schools of thought if peace is to be sustained and reinforced. Since these two schools of thought are propagated by informal peace committees in Ward 8, this discussion now turns to look at peace committees.

8.4 Informal LPCs

This theme has been organized along the following sub-themes: the self-selection model; creation of LPCs; procedures for creating LPCs; LPCs gatekeepers; composition of LPCs; functions and sustainability.

8.4.1 The self-selection model

It was noted in Chapter 3 that the distinguishing feature of informal peace committees is the self-selection model. The theme of self-selection stood out from the narratives by stakeholders in the current study

(Narr.0003; 0004; 0005; 0006 and 0007). Ward 8 peace committee employed the self-selection model and in their peacebuilding constitution, there was strong emphasis on the use of the self-selection process.

Cox and McCubbins (2004, p.33) say that self-selection occurs when members of the community makes decisions as to which individual member should occupy which position in a committee which they set on their own. From their perspective, self-selection is premised on the notion that community members use culturally approved personal attributes as criteria for certain positions. However, self-selection embraces voluntarism or willingness, as some members can request to occupy certain positions. Simply put, self-selection occurs when a community establishes a committee in order to advance its interests and needs and as such there is a leeway for some individuals to make requests to occupy certain positions. However, individual members that are self-selected are required to conform to the norms and values of the community (Cox and McCubbins, 2004, p.34-35). Although there may be various factors that drive people to decide to occupy certain positions in a committee, this aspect is however, beyond the scope of this study.

On the basis of the above discussion, this study has worked with the idea that from a peace committee framework, self-selection involves a ward or village that has developed an interest to take care of its own peace (to address peace challenges affecting their well-being) which goes on to approve, accept volunteers or request individuals to occupy certain positions in the peace structure whose primary function is to become a steering committee for the ward or village interests.

The concept of self-selection is not unique for informal peace committees. It is commonly practiced among savings groups schemes (SEEP Network, 2010, p.7). Bouman (1995, 371) prefers to call them self-help groups. In this study are called the *Mukando* scheme because that it the popular jargon that most Shona people prefer and I have decided not to deviate from this norm for the simple reason that a constitution written by Ward 8 peace committee carries this jargon. Informal peace committees and *Mukando* schemes have some basic elements in common. The obvious one is both employ the self-selection model. Secondly, both involve the participation of men and women and are community-based. Third, both are informal, they do not enjoy official recognition for *Mukando* from registered financial institutions, nor for peace committees from mainstream I4P instituted by the incumbent government.

In contrast, the *Mukando* scheme has an economic dimension while informal peace committees embrace a holistic approach – peacebuilding with a livelihoods component. Another difference is that savings groups as they are popularly understood by SEEP Network (2010) have been in existence for several decades and

have been practicing the self-selection process for long, meaning that informal peace committees have much to learn from savings groups in terms of principles of selecting individuals the management committee.

There are some commonalities in terms of principles of selection by savings groups apply to the selection process involving informal peace committees. Maruta reported that “the last two decades or so, efforts have been directed at building local peacebuilding structures in conflict-ridden and conflict-prone communities in many parts of the world.” This has further given some communities in Zimbabwe a sense of confidence in these structures, since the narrator pointed out that in Zimbabwe peace clubs have been set up the last decade and half. He went on to say that “these structures are formed either as a reaction to a particular conflict, in which case their main purpose is to contribute to the management of the conflict and to post-conflict peacebuilding.” This study has found out that peacebuilding is understood as building relationships through the management of conflicts and improvement of livelihoods at community level. It was also found out that these peacebuilding elements are currently being driven by informal peace committees. As such, it therefore follows that an understanding of how informal peace committees are created is equally important.

8.4.2 The value of creating LPCs

The theme of creation of peace committees stood out from the planning stages to the implementation of the WPC in Ward 8. NARR.0001; 0003; 0004; 0005; 0006 and 0007 stressed the importance of creating peace committees, but they indicated that procedures of implementing the self-selection process are varied.

The main point from the foregoing discussion is that peace committees should be created because their existence has had positive results in their host communities. For example, in Chivi district, Masvingo province, the reduction of electoral violence and cohesion has been credited to activities of peace committees in 23 wards. Chaplain 00012 seems to suggest that the LPC is a mechanism that can potentially help to nip behaviours inclined to electoral violence before the upcoming 2018 elections in Zimbabwe. One of the reasons why he linked peace committees with electoral violence was because in Zimbabwe, the majority of violence cases have always linked to elections since the year 2000. In districts such as Mutasa and Mudzi, electoral violence were mitigated in 2013 owing to peacebuilding activities by peace committees.

Overall, the creation of informal LPCs seems to be a worthwhile investment which most if not all communities in Zimbabwe should consider putting in place to mitigate not only violence but also other peace challenges affecting their well-being. As mentioned above, in Chivi district, the creation of peace committees resulted in communities benefiting from village banks, disadvantaged children benefiting from school fees and stationary, the construction of a crèche benefitted young children, elderly people and orphans occasionally received food hand-outs. These positive developments came about as a result of the creation of peace committees.

In literature (for instance, van Tongeren, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013), it was pointed out that in communities where incumbent governments have proved incapable of providing basic services such as food, health and education services, the creation of peace committees has provided a safety blanket for such communities. The Wajir district is a classic example of this model. Elsewhere, self-help groups such as *Mukando* and other associations which seem to share similar characteristics with peace committees have also proved instrumental in addressing peace challenges affecting communities. These have been involved in repairing debilitated school blocks, repairing roads and paying school fees for disadvantaged children. While the example of other groups is inconclusive, this study was mainly focused on the creation of informal peace committees. This study argues that the creation of a WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district was not just another academic enterprise but an intervention designed by the people who were addressing their own peace challenges (see discussion on proven benefits of the WPC in Chapter Nine).

The WPC was not only meant to improve existing initiatives but also to create a new practice of peacebuilding initiatives at community level. The approach to setting up a ward pilot peace committee was participatory. This approach has the propensity to creating new practice due to its heavy emphasis on consultation, participation and dialogue between stakeholders throughout the research process (Karlsen, 1991, p.152). Prior to establishing a WPC, I started off by establishing a baseline on indigenous conflict resolution structures bent on building peace in Shona communities in Zimbabwe.

NARR.0002 experienced a peace committee as a mammoth task in that he felt that facilitators should act in a nonpartisan manner before, during and after the establishment of a peace committee in order to gain respect of all the parties involved. He also felt that community participation in the selection of peace committee members should be prioritized. This provides an opportunity for accountability and acceptance of the peace committee in the host community. The fact that NARR.0002 learnt from experience that there are conflicts that are beyond the magnitude of peace committees made him realize that peace committees are temporary structures. Owing to the kind of reception that he received from the ward

councillor he not only experienced a sense of success but also gained confidence in existing and established structures such as police, traditional leadership and political parties. These existing structures are largely responsible for the establishment of buy-in and project interest, formation of grassroots sectors, gender equity, and the functions of peace committees as provisional structures.

On the basis of this argument, this study concludes that communities are better placed to create LPCs as they are proving to be viable in their host communities in terms of relationship-building and the improvements of livelihoods. van Tongeren (2013, p.39) makes the point that informal LPCs have the capacity “to keep the violence down, solving community problems and empowering local actors to become peace builders.” This is important, particularly in Zimbabwe and elsewhere where violence related to elections was nearly a norm since 2000. Thus, the existence of LPCs in the community makes a difference in that they help to improve the coping strategies of individual and groups as was the case in Wajir, Chivi, Mudzi and Mutasa districts.

On the basis of the above findings, this study proposed a framework for creating informal peace committees at local community levels, not only in Seke district, but perhaps for any community that may consider addressing peace challenges through the establishment of a peace committee. The stage is for facilitators to come up with key result areas. The first key result area should involve the creation of a list of contact persons. The second involves convening a meeting and securing buy-in from the contacted persons on the day of the meeting. During the meeting, these participants should be convinced by facilitators that establishing a peace committee is a worthwhile response to peace challenges affecting them. One helpful way is to narrate success stories of VPCs in the nearest district or village. Third and final, facilitators should ask village focal persons to propose time-frame for setting up a peace committee. In summation, facilitators should ask village focal persons where they think facilitators can come in to contribute to the process of setting up a VPC. Overall, once buy-in has been secured, the process of setting up a VPC should be controlled and owned by the village assembly. Procedures for setting up a VPC are discussed below.

8.4.3 Procedures for setting up WPC and VPCs

During the planning stages, implementation and analysis of results, **it came out clearly** that there is a need for written procedures for setting up informal peace committees. For example, on 17 October 2014, when I inquired from the provincial focal person, Chaplain 00012, whether there were any laid down procedures for setting up peace committees by ECLF, **he declared that** there were no laid down procedures as communities are left to employ their own culture specific methods.

The WPC in Ward 8 came up with some procedures and they were spelled out in their peacebuilding constitution. It is clearly spelled out in section 8.1.1 which reads: *How village peace committees should be put in place*. The description provided in this constitution endorses self-selection process in which the village head presides over the process but he is also the chairperson of the VPC. The steps are not very clear in that there is no clear-cut procedure except to say that the village head shall facilitate the selection of VPC whether the village will use the ballot system of election or appointment it is unclear.

In the WPC's peacebuilding constitution the word that is closely associated with procedures as used in this study is *sarudzo* (selection). The Shona verb *kusarudza* (selecting) from the noun *sarudzo* (selection) which is often associated with the creation of a committee is ambiguous in this regard because it does not explicitly suggests *sarudzo* as election through ballot alone but can also be used to suggest appointment or approval of someone to occupy a certain position in the committee. This scenario suggests that the self-selection model is flexible and open-ended.

Supportively, from the experiences of narrators, it was noted there is no standard procedure for informal peace committees partly because contexts are different and therefore it has also proved a challenge even for the ward peace committee to provide a prescription as to what should be done except to say that a committee should be put in place. This is one of the challenges of the self-selection model, it does not have a standardized way of administering the process of setting up a committee. Stakeholders are left to decide what works for them and therefore there is variation as illustrated in the stories told by narrators. The provincial focal person on 17 October 2014 endorsed the self-selection model.

For example, NARR.0005 said that the committee was appointed by the district focal person, NARR.0007 stressed that the committee was elected by the village assembly through the system of raising hands up. In Ward 8 of Seke, the district focal person appointed himself as the chairperson, the deputy and secretary and he left other positions for would-be peace committee members to co-opt their peers. NARR.0006 stressed that ECLF facilitators gave hints on who should be the chairperson of a peace committee and the selection process was by nomination and ballot system. NARR.0004 pointed out those members of the peace committee volunteered themselves into positions. By implication, the chairperson was the first to volunteer himself into the committee and this is akin to Ward 8 peace committee in which the chairperson appointed himself into the committee. NARR.0003 was silent about the selection process but it appears that she could have possibly selected herself. In Mubaiwa ward, their constitution states

clearly that the position of chairperson and secretary are a preserve for the headman and the ward councillor. These are some of the variations that surround the self-selection model.

It is important to understand that the self-selection model combines contemporary and indigenous principles. The self-selection model is applicable to people in the same village who already know each other's characters because members are selected based on approved merits and for that reason, the self-selection model is a bottom-up approach. People select each other on the basis of culturally approved attributes. In the villages, political affiliation is not one of the criterion for membership because individuals are selected basing on similarities. NARR. 0001, 0003, 0004, 0005, 0006, 0007 never mentioned inclusivity along political lines. Members were selected on the basis of similarities and inclusivity was more to do with gender than political.

In urban centres, it appears peace committees embrace political affiliation as one of the criterion. For example, those peace committees put in place by ZIMCET (2014) in Zimbabwe were very particular on political affiliation as a major criterion for inclusivity. For that reason, these peace committees were particular in terms of setting up a committee comprising of MDC and ZANU PF party members in order for the peace committee to be inclusive. This approach by urban communities can be attributed to the fact that urban communities are more politically sensitive than rural areas. This is not to say that rural people are apolitical but their political activism is often reserved as they are not as outspoken as the urbanites. This study was more focused on peace committees in rural villages.

Be that as it may, the WPC in Ward 8 seems to be aware of the meaning of inclusivity because section 3.1 states that: *the WPC is obliged to be a committee made up of all stakeholders in Ward 8*. In that same clause, the constitution goes on to outline all the stakeholders that are expected to comprise a WPC and these include: *Minister of religion; local government represented by the village head or councillor; Civil servants represented by ZRP, Ministry of Health or Education; Women; Youth; Political parties, business forum and burial societies*. From their perspective, these stakeholders represent what they understood as an inclusive WPC.

However, the concept of inclusivity in relation to VPCs remains a bone of contention for WPC in Ward 8. There is no direct link between what they termed inclusivity at ward level with VPCs. The silence on political affiliation as a criterion for a VPC suggests the point that VPCs in Ward 8 were selected using similarities as one of the major characteristics, not political affiliation. Since inclusive is one of the most highly regarded criterion in relation to peace committees, the state of affairs in Ward 8 suggests that the

WPC would need to come up with a framework in consultation with all the relevant stakeholders in the villages to define the concept of inclusivity. In other words, there is a need to come up with a blueprint developed by representatives from all the 29 villages in order to be comprehensive, all-encompassing and inclusive. After coming up with this blueprint it should be tried for a certain period to test its effectiveness and then provide the necessary adjustments until something substantial and standardized has been achieved. While the peacebuilding constitution has outlined procedures of selecting a peace committee, they did not spell out the steps that could be taken.

However using my experience of having worked with villagers and the PAG, this study, suggests that where members of the communities have shown interest in having a peace committee, the following suggested steps can be taken (see Table below):

Table 24: Procedures for setting up VPCs

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- A facilitator(s) should visit that village to see the village head or a group of pastors operating in that particular area.
 - A meeting should be convened with the village head or a group of pastors to secure buy-in from them.
 - Once there is buy-in has been secured the facilitator can provides guidelines such as that a committee should have seven people inclusive of men, women and youth as outlined in the constitution .
 - The facilitators should explain expected qualities and tasks that are expected of village peace committees as outlined in the constitution.
 - Once these are understood, the facilitator(s) should leave responsibility for selection of member to the village head or a group of pastors.
 - Emphasis should be that the peace committee should be selected at a public forum on a date to be selected by members of the village.
 - The names of members that have been selected should be given to the ward peace committee secretary for data base and update for LPCs capacity building workshops.
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Source: Author

Having said this, it is important to highlight that this process should be natural to the village or community members and the only way to ensure it remains natural is to share responsibilities between facilitator(s) and the villages. The responsibility of the facilitator(s) is to secure buy-in from the village head or a group of pastors and the responsibilities of the village assembly are to select its own peace

committee (for more details on typical steps in phases, see Chapter Ten: conclusion on procedures for setting up VPCs).

8.4.4 Composition of LPCs

Composition of local peace committees was categorized as one of the most frequent theme that emerged during LPCs capacity building workshops held in Wards 8 and 13 and by stakeholders in the current study. In literature, inclusivity is one of the major characteristics of a peace committee. Gender is one of the key variables required in order for a peace committee to be inclusive. At two LPCs capacity building workshops by the parent organization, ECLF, conducted between 13 and 14 February 2015 at Ziko t/ship in Ward 8 of Seke district, and 26 and 27 February at Beatrice t/ship, ward 13 of Seke district, inclusivity of the peace committee stood as one of the key themes. All stakeholders at these two capacity-building workshops came up with the following criteria, which comprise of the following sectors and groups of people:

- Local government which should be represented by village heads or councillor;
- Civil servants who should be represented by teachers; nurses or police officers;
- Politicians who should be represented by either ZANU PF or Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) or any other political party in Zimbabwe;
- Youth who should be represented either by ministry of youth or any youth group in the village;
- Religious leaders such as Christian pastors; or traditional religion that is being practiced in the village;
- Women who should be represented by women's groups;
- Burial societies; clubs or associations that other members of the village belong; and
- Business people who should be represented by individuals and groups involved in large or small scale entrepreneurship.

These criteria were developed during LPCs' capacity-building workshops in February 2015 and have strongly influenced the development of section 3.1 of the peacebuilding constitution, which spells out the composition of a ward peace committee (see Appendix 13). In the reviewed literature, it was noted that for peace committees to be effective and sustainable they should accommodate vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women and youth. The Ward 8 peace committee chairperson acknowledged at one point that the ward peace committee is composed of elderly people, majority of whom are aged 40 years and above, meaning there was no young person. In Zimbabwe, a youth is someone within the age range of between 16 and 35 and therefore, it means the ward pilot peace committee has an insurmountable task ahead of it to ensure that youth are represented as spelled out in their constitution. As mentioned, Chaplain 00012 stressed that members in a peace committee could be 15: women, youth, ministers of

religion and the councillor should be represented. Thus, as the situation stands, the WPC is still experiencing a challenge because it does not have a youth in the committee.

The issue about women representation in Ward 8 peace committee is beyond question because there are nine women against six men: women are certainly included. Most importantly, although the chairperson is male, the woman who is the deputy is also the chairperson for the projects team within that same ward peace committee. This arrangement was done to ensure that power is balanced in terms of decision-making, planning and implementation between the various stakeholders in the ward. As noted, village peace committees in Ward 8 which have seven members have also attempted to bring a balance in terms of gender representation. There is no peace committee without women and this development is in line with current peacebuilding initiatives which seek to involve all the relevant stakeholders in the village to ensure sustainability and effectiveness.

To exemplify this point, here are reviews of several profiles of women that are in the peace committee. The woman who is the deputy chair holds a strategic position in various civic organizations working in Seke. She is the area coordinator for Shamwari yemwanasikana and Virl micro finance, the deputy chair for world child protection and is involved in facilitating burial societies in Seke. At a political level, she is the ward political commissar in the ZANU PF party. These attributes indicates that she is very influential in the ward and even in the peace committee. Another woman who is also a committee member is very influential in that she is a village head and this means that she holds a strategic position in the community and even in the ward, as she is also a member of the ward assembly and runs a village development committee in the village she is heading. In addition, one of the women committee members is the ward coordinator. She has been working in Ward 8 for the past 11 years in that same position. Her responsibilities involve coordinating activities run by the ward and village development committees and she is the secretary to the ward councillor. She is the link person between the ward assembly comprising of 29 village heads and the duly-elected ward councillor. In the ward peace committee, she is still serving in the same capacity as the link person between ward peace committee and ward assembly. She also serves as a think tank for the ward peace committee on all matters that the peace committee may find hard to understand because she is well-versed with ward dynamics over the past 11 years. All development programmes by ward and village development committee fall under her key result areas and she works for the Ministry of women's affairs. On that note, she acts as an advisory person on current issues on gender issues for the ward peace committee, thus keeping the peace committee in step with current trends and events in the area of gender dynamics and peacebuilding.

Of particular importance is the number of ministers of religion that are in the Ward 8 peace committee. There are three of them, all males. Ministers of religion are more effective in raising awareness on peacebuilding issues as they command respect from the community. On the day of the visit to the councillor, he made similar sentiments that the strength of the committee lies in its ability to have more than one minister of religion, which, in the councillor's view, made it legitimate.

In addition, the peacebuilding constitution states clearly that the position of chairperson in the WPC shall always remain a preserve for a minister of religion. This clause was influenced by a number of factors. The major one was that on 17 October 2014, the provincial focal person advised that "we usually want to entrust issues to do with peace to the church and those ministers of religion who have been trained, we recommend that they take up chairperson positions." Narr.0006 also noted that in the process leading to the setting up of a peace committee in Chitungwiza, they were advised that they should consider giving the position of chairperson to a minister of religion. These words were said in a politically sensitive community as revealed by Narr.0006 in his story. Thus, it can be said that by declaring in the constitution that the position of the chairperson shall remain a preserve of ministers of religion, this is suggestive of the fact that a ward being a politically defined geographical space, the WPC could have considered the merits that ward councillors are political figures and therefore to avoid politicization of the WPC a relatively neutral person like a minister of religion would best suit the position of chairperson.

In addition, the involvement of the ward councillor as the ex-officio member of the ward peace committee is worth noting. In the experiences of Narr.0003, 0004, and 0005, councillors were very active. For example, in Makwarimba ward in Wedza, the councillor is the chairperson. In Mubaiwa ward, the headman is the chairperson while the councillor is the secretary. In Mudzi district, Chaplain 00012 reported that the majority of them attended CPMRT and possibilities are that they occupy key positions in the WPCs. During our discussion on 17 October 2014 with Chaplain 00012, he proposed that councillors are critical stakeholders and even in the peacebuilding constitution, there is recognition that a councillor is one of the critical stakeholders. With this evidence, it can be that this involvement provides legitimacy. His appointment as ex-officio was an important development which helped to situate the WPC into already existing networks such as WADCO, VIDCO, ward assemblies and village assemblies and other ward stakeholders.

Within these existing networks, a councillor is regarded as someone who works with local people regularly, this is evidenced by his involvement in the ward and village development committees. In that regard, a ward councillor is an important focal person for the acceptance and legitimacy of the ward peace

committee. Thus, the composition of a peace committee plays a critical role in terms of legitimacy, acceptance and it affects its operations in the community positively or negatively. The Ward 8 pilot peace committee can be applauded for having involved women who are influential and the councillor who is an important focal person whose primary role was to connect the WPC to already existing networks in Ward 8.

Even though Maruta expressed optimism about peace committees, he cast a shadow on inclusivity of peace committees as a guarantee that the committee would be at peace with itself. Rather, he felt that much depends on composition and internal dynamics of the peace committee. With respect to composition, he felt that it is the calibre of people that make up the committee, in terms of individual personality, status in the community, level of education and degree of maturity among others, which should be of priority. However, internal dynamics of the peace committee depends on the preparedness of individuals to work together, to which the committee wants to be at peace with itself. Owing to these critical factors, he advised that:

At the formation stage of the club, a lot of attention and effort must be expended in selecting the right calibre of would-be members of the club, and educating them on the vision and mission of the club and the nature of its work before taking them in.

By and large, Maruta felt that the concept of peace committee “has the potential to reach every community in every corner of the country.” Overall, the composition of peace committees has proved to be critical factor for its sustainability and effectiveness. For informal peace committee inclusivity does not involve the inclusion of different sides of the conflict as is often the case with formal peace committees which has a mandate to include different political parties.

Informal peace committees are like their counterparts, WADCOs and VIDCOs, which do not represent different sides of the conflict. The composition of WADCO or VIDCO is not by political affiliation but similar characteristics. Members residing in the same village with certain kind of personalities approved by the village are selected into the WADCO or VIDCO. This model was supported by Narr.0003. However, Ward 8 peace committee spelled out the characteristics for would-be peace committee members and these qualities have all to do with culturally approved qualities, not political affiliation (see *section 8.1.2* of the constitution). The WADCO and VIDCO are internal structures whose major characteristic is extensive networks and it is these networks that act as lubricant for communities to achieve their aspirations. Similarly, the composition of ward peace committees has followed suit in utilizing of extensive networks that are found in communities by bringing in the ward councillor, village heads, women and ministers of religion. Thus, the composition is Ward 8 peace committees is another marked feature for informal peace committee elsewhere and the strength of composition lies in the ability of the

peace committee to position itself with focal persons already connected to existing structures. However this study proposes that since there are more women than men in Ward 8, according to the 2012 census more VPCs should be chaired by women. Currently, of all the existing five VPCs that were put in place none of them is chaired by a woman and this scenario tells something about the general perception with regards to women and their positions in the VPCs. The complexity of the matter is that the WPC constitution states that VPC chairperson are village heads and most village heads are males except for Kuwora village which is headed by a woman who is a member of the WPC. Thus the issue of composition should be looked into especially with regards to the position of women in VPCs.

The role of human and social capital in the composition of LPCs in Ward 8

The above discussion supports the notion that social capital was the most important factor for the composition of LPCs as findings suggest in the current study. Human capital refers to individual and collective knowledge and skills held by individual community members (Hill, 2011, p.156). A skill is a proficiency in a particular area/domain. For instance, one may have some proficiency in dialogue facilitation, decision making processes and in creative thinking to mention but a few (See Appendix 15 for WPC skills inventory). King et al (2010, p.337) describe social capital as affective bonds between citizens and local cooperation. By extension, social capital is the glue that holds communities together by promoting social harmony and a sense of community. This aspect is what brought the WPC together as an LPC in Ward 8 of Seke district.

The availability of agnate, affinity and neighbor relations among the Shona people is indicative of the existence of social capital. Through agnate bonds Shona people were able to create shared norms and values resulting in group solidarity (Pruitt and Carnevale, 1997, 139) and group solidarity was instrumental in the formation and composition of an LPC in Ward 8. As Murithi (2006, p.14) notes, group solidarity involves “recognizing and treating each other as human beings and a shared concern in the common welfare and well-being of each other. Treating each other as humans means that when a conflict occurs the parties respect each other’s point of view and strive to come up with a mutually satisfying solution. Although group solidarity can change over time due to a number of factors which are beyond the scope of this study, solidarity is usually sustained by kin obligations which include but are not limited to obedience, respect and mutual hospitality (reciprocity). When applied to Ward 8 LPC members it can be argued that each member embraces mutual obligations and this helped to sustain group solidarity (Marsh and Hsu, 1995, p.350) through the promotion of co-existence. Thus, each member has obligations, privileges and expected behaviours and this is what has helped to sustain the LPC between 7 November 2014 and 22 July 2015 and even beyond.

Obligations come with privileges. Some of the privileges include addressing problems collectively and sharing of the burdens of life. According to Dinda (2008, p.202), groups with higher social capital have the propensity to solve their own problems collectively and more easily. Behavior patterns and attitudes with the propensity to cooperation breeds social cohesion that is the propensity to cooperate and to work together for the common good.

Religion was one of the key factors that was instrumental in the composition especially of the WPC. For instance there are three ministers of religion all of which belong to Christianity. In fact the majority of the members in the WPC subscribes to Christian values such as love, compassion, faithfulness, peacefulness, tolerance, forgiveness: most of these values are remotely related to African traditional religion which finds expression in the principles of *unhu*. Although African traditional religion and Christianity are not the same, in rural Shona communities these religions have tended to share platforms, thus enhancing the values of tolerance, co-existence, accommodation or non-violence which embed these prime religions in Shona communities in Seke district.

To this end, it can be argued that owing to existing social capital and religious affiliation among members in Ward 8, a LPCs was created and members were chosen on merits of existing networks, respectability, trust, honesty, moral uprightness and religious affiliations. The membership integrated religious figures, bringing important values and beliefs. This study therefore argues that the existing social capital and religious tolerance between members of Ward 8 LPC suggests possibilities of sustainability of this formation.

8.4.5 LPCs gatekeepers

LPCs gatekeepers is one of the sub-themes that stood out from the narratives by stakeholders (Narr.001; 0003; 0004; 0005; 0006 and Narr.0007). Village heads and ward councillors were mentioned every now and then as gatekeepers. Lederach (1997, p.50) points out that peace committees should be situated in “an extensive network.” For example, in Makwarimba ward in Wedza district where an LPC is chaired by a councillor as a member of the executive peace committee comprising of seven, the idea was to situate this peace committee in an existing pool of networks. This trend is prevalent in Mubaiwa ward in Wedza in which an LPC is chaired by the headman and the secretary is the ward councillor. A ward is a forum for peacebuilding activities which has at its disposal the various institutional networks such as ward development and village development committees.

In peacebuilding, it is vital to identify focal persons (hereafter referred to as gatekeepers) who have the capacity to work through existing networks. In his pyramid model of the three levels of leadership in peacebuilding activities, Lederach (1997, p.51) singled out middle range leadership as focal persons who stands in between the elites and the grassroots. In the current study, Ward 8 councillor is a classic example of middle range leaders. As a member of Ward 8 peace committee in Seke district, he connects the Zimbabwe parliament (top leadership) with traditional leaderships (village heads and chiefs who represents grassroots). However, a councillor in theory represents a political party in the Zimbabwean context but in practice as Lederach (1997, p.42) states, his/her “status and influence (as a middle range leader) is derived from “friendships and acquaintances.” Although a councillor in this context belongs to a political party in that he/she is elected under the MDC or ZANU PF ticket, the fact remains that s/he works with village heads and chiefs who, according to law, are to be non-partisan. This position places ward councillors and village heads in the limelight, making them better placed to work with informal peace committees both at village and ward levels as results of the current study have shown.

In summation, if Lederach’s (1997, p.42) model is anything to go by, it can be safely concluded that villages and wards are “primary networks of groups and institutions” which have the potential to build peace at local community levels if properly utilized. The setting up of informal peace committee is one such approach that has proved viable and has made a marked difference owing to the instrumentality of village heads and councillors as gatekeepers and stakeholders.

8.4.6 Functions of peace committees in Ward 8

Results of the current study have shown that peacebuilding is a joint action and therefore, WPC has the responsibility to engage relevant stakeholders. For example, it was pointed out that in case of conflict from within the peace committee, they should identify stakeholders who have the capacity to engage the people in conflict. However, they acknowledged that some conflicts could be beyond their capacity. They have also acknowledged that conflicts come in diverse forms and so they suggested that there is need to engage relevant stakeholders able to address the conflict issues in their area of expertise. For example, if it is a land dispute within the village, they agreed that they should engage the village head or chief because they are the relevant stakeholder. If it is a rape, they said they should engage the police because that is their sector. From their perspective, stakeholders are the entry points for the peace committee in conflicts in their areas of jurisdiction because we cannot all do the same thing at the same time.

The majority of stakeholders noted that they must address conflicts wherever they happen before they get worse. Their point was that they should be on high alert to prevent conflict “while it is still at the next

house so that it does not come to our own". They reiterated that if they do not address those conflicts where they occur, the peace committee could not address them because they will have been transformed into players rather than interveners. Further, stakeholders noted that if they hear that there is a conflict somewhere they should be ready to help resolve that conflict, arguing that our fathers used to say "you should only mock someone for being disabled when you are dead", which means that if someone has a problem/conflict is similar to having a disability. In summation, they stressed the point that, if there is a conflict somewhere, they should not just observe and ignore because in future the conflict can spill over to any place, even their homes. Stakeholders were trying to say that if one does not deal with conflict outside his/her home that person, will not be able to deal with it when it comes into his/her house because that person will now be a player. They emphasized that peace committee members should address conflict before it spills out of control. Also, they pointed out that it is a well-known fact that conflict has a tendency to repeat itself. If it is at one's neighbour's place today, tomorrow it can be at my house. Thus, they stressed that they should work together with their neighbours to resolve their conflict today and not wait.

Further, stakeholders' noted that conflict has a starting point, an escalation point and a de-escalation point. Therefore, peace committees should endeavour to deal with conflict as it arises and resolve it together "before it destroys relationships and lives as the rains can do if suitable shelter has not been built before the rains fall". They concluded that addressing conflict at their midst helps them in that if they manage to work together and successfully resolve the conflict, any future conflicts can be contained before destroying relationships, life and property of the people involved.

8.4.7 Collaborative relationship between WADCO, VIDCO, WPC and VPCs

These structures were mentioned by stakeholders in the current study and one of the sources of confusion or contention was that there is no clear line of distinction as to which committee does what, as it appears that all these committees embrace the livelihoods component. The stakeholders clearly stated that the WPC and VPCs are not the only structures that villages have set up. Each village has a VIDCO, which is periodically selected by the village assembly. For that reason, there are some similarities between VPC and VIDCO, but there are also major differences as well. VIDCO "are elected bodies with responsibility for defining local needs" (Stewart, Klugman and Helmsing, 1994). In simpler terms, the aim of VIDCO is to promote income-generating projects by individuals and groups at a village level. VPCs aim to build relationships through the non-violent resolution of conflicts, with income-generating projects as a critical component for development and peacebuilding. The majority of stakeholders repeatedly stressed that peace is the pre-condition for sustainable income-generating projects at the village level and that such

projects can mitigate conflict. The question is if these committees are not duplicating their duties in the same community and how should they relate to each other in terms of executing their duties to the same community. Stakeholder 4 made these points that:

Each of these two committees should define their parameters, for example, the ward development committee should spell out clearly that out activities involves one, two three and the ward peace committee should also come to the open to spell out their activities to avoiding a clash of interests.

Further, she said,

If the interests of the ward development committee and those of the peace committee can be similar in some way –but if these two committees have well outlined plans of activities and then they communicate to each other using existing structures and protocol, conflict is likely to be minimized. And the only way forward is after communicating between these communities, they can even plan to collaborate in an attempt to address problems affecting their community and this can only be possible after these two committees have established common ground through an open-communication system.

As is the case with VIDCO, the WPC gave the responsibility of setting up village peace committees to village heads. A VIDCO has six members. Four are elected and two are nominated from the ranks of both women and youth (Stewart, Klugman and Hemsing, 1994). VIDCO works hand in glove with the village community worker (VCW). The VCW as, Stewart, Klugman and Hemsing (1994) notes:

Works with the VIDCO and community to identify problems and development needs, coordinate development activities, collect, record, analyse and submit accurate information about the village. VCWs frequently identify local needs through organizing community meetings, thereby facilitating local participation.

VCWs are accountable to the ministry of Community Development: in other words, they are government employees. This is the marked difference with informal peace committees which are accountable to the local community, not the government. The local needs targeted by the VIDCO can also be similar to those pursued by the village peace committees, thereby igniting a conflict of interest. As stakeholder 4 warned, if common ground is not established these committees can be a hotbed for conflicts of interests, not only in Ward 8 but in other parts of Zimbabwe where peace committees have now become the committees of fashion. It appears that the VIDCO and WADCO have been overtaken by events because the tenor of event seems to be more favourable for peace committees. However, in the reviewed literature, it was noted that for peace committees to be sustainable they should not violate the space of existing structures such as customary courts, especially the VIDCO and WADCO, as these structures command legitimacy in their host communities. Stakeholder 4 suggests that the ward councillor should be instrumental in mitigating any potential conflict of interest by facilitating a forum where these committees should draw lines of distinction to ensure collaboration and mutuality. Thus, there is a need to come up with a mechanism for collaboration if sustainability is to be achieved between these various community structures.

8.4.8 Sustainability of informal LPCs

The theme of sustainability was raised in the current study. The question of sustainability centres on ownership of the process and the peace committee initiative. Sustainability was spelled out by the provincial focal person on 17 October 2014 when the district focal person and I made inquiries whether there were laid down procedures for setting up peace committees. In response, he declared that it is the community that takes the responsibility to set up a peace committee in order to win both the process and the initiative.

It was apparent from Maruta's narrative that members of these structures are ordinary people and they:

have access to people and situations in the community that outsiders would not have... they can link the process with a cross-section of the community, both vertically to include the top echelons, ordinary residents and everybody in between, and horizontally across all social divisions.

Maruta felt that a peace committee is based in the community and is there all the time meaning that "members of the community have access to it almost as and when a need arises." Owing to these merits, he is optimistic that peace committees can effectively handle conflicts at community level. Consequently, based on his experiences of peace committees, he felt that "peace committees often do not have the capacity to deal directly with political level conflicts. This limitation is especially noticeable during election time when political polarisation in communities takes centre stage." Nevertheless, Maruta is hopeful that "compared to peacebuilding projects run directly by an external agency, a local peace club is relatively less expensive." Further, he expressed optimism that:

When it comes to local protocol, local peace clubs are the best. This involves liaising with the local authorities and other organisations working in the area, mobilising participants from among the local population, and organising venues and supplies among other things. Members of the local peace clubs know who to contact and when, and the procedures to follow in order to get the best results.

To that end, he was cognizant that some external agencies exploit local peace clubs to their own advantage, because they hide "the in-kind contributions of the local peace clubs, or the numerous hours of donkey work put in by their members, from the project accounts which nevertheless go onto reflect large sums of money not actually spent." He also felt that while ownership and sustainability of peace clubs at the community level "might happen of its own accord, often it has to be planned for and built into the process at the formation stage." This narrator felt that ownership and sustainability is made possible by the fact that "every going-on gets to be known by everyone around, not least the village head." Further, the narrator felt that peace clubs possessed exceptional opportunities such as:

the more the peace club works in the community, with the community and for the community, the more the community co-owns its work and is predisposed to carry it forward with or without the participation and/or support of the external agency that might have initiated it.

The current study has worked with the idea that if members of the community participate in the selection process as was cited by NARR.0003, 0004, 0005, 0006 and 0007, there is greater possibility that the

community can own that peace committee. WPC and the five VPCs in Ward 8 employed the self-selection model and thus its sustainability can be guaranteed if members in these committees desist from fanning factionalism and competition. Only unity, cooperation and single-mindedness as stressed by stakeholder 1, 2, 4 and NARR. 0006 can help to sustain this peace initiative.

8.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the major themes around the concept of peace, peacebuilding and informal LPCs. The concept of peace was associated with living together, getting along and good relations. The present study found out that villages are making efforts towards the achievements of both negative and positive peace paradigms through low-cost entrepreneurship activities such as *Mukando*, bee keeping, road-runner poultry projects among others. The elements of peace such as living together, getting along and good relationships all fall under the categories of *the yet-peace*. *The-yet-peace* is that kind of peace we have experienced or are currently making efforts to achieve. It is peace in the present. While the *yet-peace* is achievable, villages still yearn for something better and more fulfilling; this yearning for a better state of affairs was the starting point for this study to argue for the *not-yet-peace*, which is more visionary, what might be.

Results in this study have shown that informal LPCs are a direct response by communities to address peace challenges affecting their well-being. Informal LPC are created through a model called self-selection. The self-selection model guarantees sustainability of the WPC in that it is based on the participation, control and ownership of the initiative by host village. The chapter has concluded that owing to the emergence of informal LPCs, local communities have proved to be capable of addressing peace challenges affecting their well-being, thus, demystifying the notion that peace challenges is a preserve of incumbent governments. Fundamentally, informal LPCs have become instrumental for local communities to sustain cohesion and in achieving the aspirations of local communities. The chapter therefore recommended that communities should take responsibility of their own peace by setting up LPCs.

CHAPTER NINE:

EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses results of the evaluation of the pilot WPC that was put in place as a result of collaborative work of 15 co-researchers in Ward 8 of Seke district. The results presented in this chapter covered a period that ran from 30 September 2014 to 22 July 2015. Evaluation questions sought to establish the extent to which the WPC has benefited both members of the WPC and villages that created VPCs. Owing to the creation of the WPC, there were proven benefits and it was hoped that these benefits will help to inspire villagers in Ward 8 to consider setting up more VPCs as they have proved to be a viable response to addressing peace challenges affecting communities in Ward 8.

9.2 The Methodology

In traditional research, the people who are researched know little with regards to the purpose of the research; it is only the researcher who knows what is to be done (Maphosa, 2013, p.93). However, in the current study this was not the case because I presumed that local people in the community had a knowledge bank (Lederach, 1995) which I needed to tap into during our interactions. This was the first step in PAR in which I had to have an open mind to learn new insights from the WPC. I did not considered members I worked with as passive recipients of knowledge transfer from me, but I regarded them as active researchers and developers of knowledge in Ward 8.

Informed by the PAR design that local people should build on what they already know and have in peacebuilding, PAR methodology was developed under the leadership of one pastor, who happened to be the district focal person for ECLF. By 2012, ECLF had appointed a provincial and district focal persons to help facilitate CPMRT sensitization workshops in Mashonaland east province and Seke received this training in 2013. These two did not establish any particular methodology to support and guide the setting up informal peace committees. I proposed the PAR methodology when I engaged with the district focal person in 2014 and he accepted. The two of us began developing methods to work with local people in the setting up of a WPC along the following areas:

- To set up a ward pilot peace committee comprising of people resident in Ward 8.
- To set up a ward pilot peace committee comprising of both male and female adults who were already pre-deposed to peace issues thus increasing chances of all individuals that had under gone the CPMRT sensitization workshop in Ward 8.

- To develop a team of peacebuilding who were going to work as both ears and eyes in the community as well as peace builders in the whole of Seke.
- To have 15 member ward peace committee who were to become co-researchers.

Following a series of meetings involving the provincial, district focal persons and myself, from 30 September to 6 November 2014, we tried out all the plans that had been decided on 7 November when we called for an information meeting. Of the 15 members that were identified, 10 were contacted over the phone and on the day of the information meeting six turned up. The meeting was chaired by the district focal person and on the basis of consensus from those that turned up, the district focal person went ahead made appointments. I was appointed secretary of the committee and one woman was appointed deputy. Since a buy-in to set up a peace committee was secured, those who had not turned up were assumed to be in agreement with the resolutions that a ward peace committee was worthwhile. The rest of the members including those who had not turned up were appointed *in absentia* through the approval of the six that participated in the meeting.

Although the trial to put plans into action was not so neat and scientific, however, it provided information first to the WPC and secondly to the current study on what should be done in future when setting up VPCs. By January 2015, the parent organization, ECLF, had provided technical advice to the WPC by creating a platform for interactions with six other LPCs from districts such as Wedza and Marondera districts. By February 2015, an LPC capacity-building workshop was run in Ward 8, bringing together all members of the peace committee members and one VPC that had been established by then.

Capacity building workshops run by ECLF were instrumental in the current study. As noted above, ECLF is a parent organisation of the WPC and VPCs in Ward 8 of Seke district (See Appendix 13) and the WPC led the process during the course of this study. ECLF conducted more than five workshops in Seke district and I had the opportunity to participate in the five-day ECLF mediation skills training workshop in 2011, a three day sensitisation workshop in 2013, popularly known as CPMRT and two by two days LPC capacity building workshops in 2015. Although almost every workshop was instrumental in contributing to the development of the current study, capacity building workshops stood out because the two capacity building workshops were attended by the WPC in Ward 8. The thrust of capacity building workshops were that:

- conflict is part of everyday life;
- people should address conflict without the use of violence;
- people should create peace so that they can develop and

- that the improvements of livelihoods through income-generating projects are critical for peace building.

Peacebuilding insights gained through interactions with other LPCs and capacity building workshops were diffused into the Mukando and peacebuilding constitutions and future plans that are currently underway (see *goals and objectives* of the peacebuilding constitution, Appendix 13). The two documents Mukando and peacebuilding constitution (Appendices 11 and 13) represent two peacebuilding complimentary strands; the livelihood component –which finds expression in the Mukando constitution and conflict resolution which finds expression in the peacebuilding constitution. Owing to capacity building workshops the writing of the two constitutions by the PAG represents the apex of the current study in contributing towards peacebuilding discourses.

9.3 Sampling process

My first priority was to engage the district focal person. For that reason, I purposively identified the district focal person, knowing well-ahead of time that we were going to collaborate in the identification the would-be peace committee members from amongst a pool of ECLF trained participants. Thus, working with the district focal person, we considered the pros and cons of using the non-probability purposive technique and we opted to use the snow-ball technique as well. In the first place, we used our own judgment to recruit would-be peace committee participants in Ward 8. Only those participants considered eligible were called for the information meeting held on 7 November 2015. Prior to the information meeting, the district focal person and I purposively selected six members plus the two of us to make a total of eight.

Secondly, we assigned one would-be peace committee female member to purposively identify four female would-be members whom she knew had been trained by ECLF. This was the point at which we realized we needed to recommend the use of the snow-ball technique to identify other would-be peace committee members. At the end, about seven would be participants were identified through the use of the snow-ball ssampling technique, making a total of 15 members. The important thing to note was that the selection process was reviewed and approved by insiders, in particular those that attended the information meeting. Thus every individual who attended the information meeting was recommended directly or indirectly by his/her peers and that is what made the WPC to fit squarely with the self-selection model. Although not every recommended member was able to attend the information meeting, the important thing was that I was tasked with the responsibility to write down names of would-be members *in absentia* and we resolved that a follow-up meeting was to be convened. These follow-up meetings bred the birth of a WPC on 7 November 2014.

Although initially I had planned to involve only the 15 members WPC and three village peace committee members in Ward 8, I decided to include informants from other districts such as Wedza, Marondera, Mutare district and Harare in order to make sense of their experiences of processes involved in setting up informal peace committees. Thus, by including participants outside Seke district the study was enriched by a multiplicity of perspectives from beyond the borders of Seke district. Overall, the sample comprised of 42 individual members comprising of both males and females.

9.4 Experiences in the formation of the WPC in Ward 8 of Seke

On 7 November 2014, all would-be peace committee members were invited to an information meeting which was facilitated by the district focal person. The aim of the information meeting was to convince all would-be peace committee members that a peace committee was worthwhile and therefore we were hoping to secure buy-in from would-be ward pilot peace committee participants. The district focal person engaged every member that attended the meeting. The consultative approach to would-be stakeholders was aimed at getting “all stakeholders on-board, paving the way for ownership and sustainability” (Reeler, 2007, p.6) of the WPC. Thus, from the very first day of the meeting, the WPC adopted a participatory type of approach because they resolved that regular meetings should be convened on every Friday until the end of December 2014. The resolution to meet every Friday, seven consecutive weeks from 7 November to 27 December 2014, was an attempt by Ward 8 peace committee to adhere to the principles of PAR. From January we resolved that meetings were to be convened monthly.

Out of this experience I can safely conclude that creating a peace committee requires collaboration, sensitivity to the views of other people whom one is working with, focus and courage. In essence, creating a peace committee is not a far-fetched initiative as it is possible to put it in place with or without funding. Local people have vast resources at their disposal that can be utilized when planning to set up an informal peace committee. Resources were capital that included the physical and social. For instance, in Ward 8, we have been making use of churches to conduct our meetings and because the majority of us belonged to those churches when we conducted our business we were not classified as people who needed to hire the premises. These premises are still accessible to us and were instrumental for the setting up of the WPC.

9.4.1 Experiences on self-evaluation

There are a number of things that can be learnt about the self-evaluation. The self-evaluation model was able to put the WPC in the limelight, in that they were able to come up with a blueprint for peacebuilding

and it embraced building relationships and the improvement of livelihoods components. After the evaluation, the WPC indicated its preparedness to take upon itself the critical areas embraced in their peacebuilding blueprint. In addition, it appears the various meetings that the WPC conducted and interactions with other peace committee in Wedza district gave the WPC the confidence to develop a blueprint aimed at addressing peace challenges bedevilling local communities in Ward 8 of Seke.

In addition, the recommendation to write the peacebuilding constitution and to set up VPCs after analysis of the self-evaluation results was not overly ambitious or beyond their reach considering that by the time of self-evaluation the WPC had already written the *Mukando* constitution. Also, by the time of writing this report they had written a peacebuilding constitution. It was drafted on 6 April 2015 and on 22 July it was formally adopted.

Apart from that, the establishment of VPC in Ward 8 was realized in 2015. These achievements are indicative of progress and commitment to achieve their aspirations. These achievements suggest that there is nothing that can hinder the WPC from to establish VPCs in all the 29 villages comprising Ward 8. What is needed, as the stakeholders noted, is to remain united, determined, committed and sacrifice knowing that peacebuilding is a mammoth task requiring effort, single-mindedness and collaboration.

The PAG developed a model of peacebuilding in Seke after learning from the experiences and sharing of ideas among stakeholders in the ward. The model involved the integration of peacebuilding and community development. This model was developed in order to provide a more contextualized understanding of peacebuilding in Ward 8. Simply put, this model was integrated with information and ideas generated from stakeholder presentations during the tour.

In addition, an LPC capacity-building workshop conducted between 13 and 14 February 2015 was also inspirational in that it linked peacebuilding with community development through the livelihoods component. The livelihoods component was a characteristic feature especially among peace committees in Chivi district of Masvingo province that were involved in income-generating projects such as poultry and village banks. This was also a source of inspiration leading to a conceptual shift from emphasis on the relationship-building school to peacebuilding with a livelihoods component.

Of late, peacebuilding in Ward 8 of Seke district was conventionally understood as predominantly a conflict resolution initiative with links to development projects. Up until 2013, when CPMRT was conducted in Ward 8, there was no conceptual clarity on the relationship between peacebuilding and

community development in particular the livelihoods component. This conceptual deficiency was also evident during our preparatory meetings with the district focal person; and PAG meetings between 7 November 2014 and 27 December 2014, in which the emphasis was on conflict resolution initiatives without a clear blueprint on the link between conflict resolution and community development projects. Overall, the adoption of *Mukando* scheme showed some links but they were blurred until a conceptual shift on 30 January 2015, when peacebuilding came to be understood as building relationships and the improvements of livelihoods of individual and groups.

9.4.2 My experience with village sensitization tours

As a result of working with stakeholders in Seke during the village tour programme, the outreach of the peacebuilding committee was further extended through its linkages with other organizations and agencies in Ward 8. Thus, through this interactive collaborative relationship between Ward 8 stakeholders, the peacebuilding programme diffused widely. These tours were not so neat and comprehensive in terms of providing adequate space for community members to reflect, but the tour provided an opportunity for the ward peacebuilding committee to sensitize communities and obtain a foothold for future peacebuilding programme in host villages.

During the tour, it was made clear that the formation of VPCs was to be supervised by the village head and the village assembly and this arrangement gave high credibility in terms of ownership of the process and VPCs. The village assemblies were provided with criteria to assist them in the involvement of all social groups such as women and youth and the qualities required of would-be members of the VPC.

9.4.3 My experiences with peacebuilding stakeholders in Ward 8

The involvement of sectors such as the ward assembly, ward development committee, ZRP, ministry of women's affairs, ministry of youth and family support trust among other stakeholders suggests possibilities of future coordination and collaboration between these stakeholders in peacebuilding. During the village tour, the WPC worked in collaboration with a number of stakeholders working in Ward 8, shown in Table 25, who were involved during the sensitization tours. Each stakeholder was involved in sensitizing communities in the key result areas.

Table 25: Ward 8 stakeholders involved in village sensitization tours

Stakeholder	Core-business and Peacebuilding potential
Ward Development Committee	-To spearhead the formation of groups at ward levels -The promotion of income-generating projects at ward level
Ward Assembly	-To provide a social order and instil indigenous peaceable values
Zimbabwe Republic Police	-To promote law and order and sensitize communities on crime prevention mechanisms and community policing
Family Support Trust	-To Spearhead family enhancing programme and the reintegration of orphaned and abandoned children
Ministry of Women's Affairs	-To spearhead and promote the improvement of the livelihoods of women through income-generating projects
Shamwari yemwanasikana	-To protect the rights of the girl child through the provision of school fees, stationary, health services to victims of rape
Ministry of Youth	-the promotion of youth empowerment programmes such as sporting, agricultural activities, career guidance and other educational activities to help them realize their dreams
Ministers of religion	-To foster peaceable values such as love, respect, reconciliation or mercy
Ward councillor	-To spearhead ZIM ASSET in particular food security and nutrition and the promotion of grassroots development

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

These stakeholders have a role to play in peacebuilding in that the ward assembly provides a social order to all 29 villages. The ward development committee is responsible for coordinating all development activities both at ward and village levels. The ZRP serves as a herald to ward community members on the reality of crimes such as assault, stock theft, rape or domestic violence in the homes and villages. Women's affairs aim to empower women in rural areas with skills and knowledge to improve and sustain their livelihoods through income generating projects. Ministry of youth aims to empower youth through the promotion of programmes such as youth games, sport and agricultural activities to help them realize their dreams. Taken together, these activities by stakeholders in Ward 8 serve one purpose, that is to address challenges affecting local communities. As such, there was general consensus that there is need for collaboration between the WPC and these stakeholders in order to find out how they can count on each other in building peace.

Overall, there is substantial evidence that the WPC made an impact in the way in which its members are now understanding peacebuilding. Initially, members of the peace committee associated peacebuilding with conflict resolution with now clear line of relationship with livelihood component. The WPC felt that they now understand that all along they have been involved in building peace in various ways, however, they promised that they are now better informed about peacebuilding work. Apart from that, they felt they

have been able to combine conflict resolution with income generating projects which some members of the peace committee thought were direct opposites. From this evidence it is clear that the ward peace committee has gained acceptance from its members, village assemblies, village heads and the ward councillor. The fact that some villagers decided to put in place peace committees after the sensitization tour are shining examples of acceptance of the WPC in Ward 8. Also, the subsequent reception by village heads to the support visits in March 2013 particularly for the three VPCs that benefited from the support visit were classic examples of the extent to which the intervention has made in-roads into the community. Although, the WPC has its own limitations and challenges such as unavailability of funding to run its activities and assist VPCs financially, the WPC was received with enthusiasm by the newly established VPCs during the support visits. The presence of village heads to stand by their VPCs in all the three villages visited on 13 March were shining examples of interest and acceptance of the WPC and its positive impact in the community.

9.4.4 Creation of VPCs

As mentioned, the creation of VPC was left in the hands of village heads. Village assemblies proved to be cooperative and useful in terms of feedback on the establishment of VPC and the provision of venues for information meeting. To date we have not been doubtful that the VPC has not been formed without the active participation of a village assembly. One of the major characteristics that have given peace committees a niche in peacebuilding is its inclusivity in terms of gender and ownership by members of the community. There has not been any peace committee that is dominated by men out of the five that village assemblies established. However, this study proposes for the creation of a seven member district peace committee involving the district administrator, chief Seke, a minister of religion, a representative from the ministries of Women's affairs, and Youth, one civic organization, and a police officer. Lederach (1997, p.51) singled out middle range leadership as focal persons who stands in between the elites and the grassroots. In this context, the district peace committee serves as the middle range leadership whose role will be to link VPCs and WPCs with the NPRC. The parent organization, for instance, ECLF in the case of Seke district, should facilitate the creation of the district peace committee (See Appendix 9).

9.4.5 The functions of the WPC and VPCs in Ward 8

From the evaluation, it emerged that before a WPC was put in place, some members of the peace committee used to think that a peace committee comprised some pockets of Christians who met to bring their ideas together to promote peace. Others were of the idea that ECLF as the parent organization could have helped in the identification of would-be peace committee members and of setting up a WPC. In that regard, ECLF was going to unveil some funds to help the WPC to run its activities. Others still used to

think that a peace committee had nothing to do with income generating projects but was mainly concerned with negotiations and seeing to it that people are not fighting. However, after the establishment of a WPC, they now understand peace committee as a committee involving members of the community who are working in their community to address peace challenges affecting their community. In the same vein, they now understand peacebuilding as a joint-process whose core objective is to build relationships and improvement livelihoods by addressing peace challenges. Further, they concluded that peacebuilding is context-specific because each host community has its own challenges. In Ward 8, peace challenges singled out include:

- Hunger and food insecure households
- Unavailability of finances to pay school fees
- Rape cases involving the girl child
- Domestic violence
- Stock theft
- Robbery
- Theft
- **Fighting**
- Disputes of land boundaries

Within this framework, a peace committee is now understood as a vehicle that provides people with an understanding of how to take responsibility of their own peace, to embark on income generating projects, produce their own food in order to address peace challenges bedevilling their community. In addition, a peace committee is now understood as a mechanism that can help to create employment in that if a project grows bigger the committee, can employ some individuals to assist in the running of the project and thus, helping to build peace in the area of employment and improvement of livelihoods of people. Furthermore, a peace committee is now understood as a mechanism that is bent on uniting people to work together by engaging conflictants in dialoguing.

Overall, income-generating projects were ranked high for conflict mitigation by the WPC. The general perception was that if an individual has a project that s/he is running chances are that most of the time s/he will be occupied and therefore avoiding confrontation. As such, it was argued that peace challenges singled out above can be mitigated if individuals and groups engage in some projects as this can help to reduce theft, robbery, and hunger because people may have better chances of sustaining their livelihoods. Thus, the belief that individuals and groups should have their own projects – for example, beekeeping, fish ponds and gardening, as these projects are not labour intensive - was central and prominent in participants' understanding of the functions of peace committees.

9.5 Proven benefits of the WPC and VPCs in Ward 8

Basing on the evaluation results, it was clear that the setting up of the WPC had some tangible benefits which included among other things:

- There was increased knowledge on the notion that an individual or a group can start a project with what they already have in their homes instead of looking for a donor or borrowing money to fund a project. Further, it was noted that the WPC helped some of its members to resuscitate projects which seemed to have been long forgotten because some people seemed to be of the view that a project becomes a project only when one has received money from donors. However, members of the WPC and VPCs now have increased knowledge that one can start with road-runners, beekeeping, piggery or vegetable garden and move on with life. In the same vein, it emerged that the WPC has made some members of the peace committee and villagers to understand that if an individual works with his/her own hands s/he can do away with poverty which is the breeding ground for conflict and violence in communities today. Owing to this increased knowledge, some VPCs for example, Marimbi, have started a poultry project in which a nine member team made each to donate a live road-runner chicken in April 2015. By the time of writing of this report these chickens were starting to lay some eggs. Similarly, Chikambi VPC has engaged in market gardening as a group in which they have planted varieties of vegetables.
- The WPC has benefited its members in that they never had the chance to tour all the villages in Ward 8 before and especially to find out what each village was currently doing to build peace in the communities. Owing to the WPC, they felt that now they know which village is doing what to build peace. In addition, they also felt that the 16 villages that were toured have increased knowledge that each individual can start his/her own project with road-runners that they have in their homes. Also, they felt that villages now have increased knowledge on what should individuals and the village at large do to reduce poverty and hunger - all of which are critical elements of peacebuilding.
- It was also found out that owing to the WPC, individuals in the villages excelled in improving their livelihoods through road-runner projects, fishponds, market gardening and bee keeping. Of late, it appears most people in the villages had not realized that they could start income-generating projects; instead some individuals seemingly were always crying foul that government was not willing to extend a helping hand for them to start projects.
- Yet again, owing to the WPC, its members felt that they have been able to mix and interact with various stakeholders in the ward who are involved in peacebuilding different ways (see table

above on Ward 8 stakeholders). As a result of interacting and sharing the same platform some commonalities have been identified and most importantly a working relationship was established during village tours and the WPC hopes to continue to share ideas in order to find ways on how all stakeholders in Ward 8 can collaborate in future peacebuilding initiatives.

It was clear that peace committee members had learned a number of skills: having skills to run a project was understood as very foundational to the improvement of livelihoods both at individual and group levels. Individuals and groups were able to learn these skills because the focus of the WPC was to encourage people to build peace through the improvement of livelihoods, since income generating projects is one of the key building blocks for peacebuilding and thus, enhancing the assumption that peacebuilding is related to the improvement of livelihoods and development. In the evaluation, it emerged that income-generating projects are a key variable in rural development in that they help to improve the livelihoods of rural people. For example, through the *Mukando* scheme, community members form groups “initially to provide a solution to supplement their income” (van Niekerk and van Niekerk, 2009, p.128). The added benefits of the *Mukando* scheme are cohesion, network forming, social integration, emotional support and infrastructure development (ibid.).

Furthermore, owing to LPCs’ capacity-building workshops conducted on 12 and 13 February 2015, participants were made to understand that the functions of peace committees involves among others; facilitating reconciliation between individuals in homes and villages where possible, conducting awareness campaigns with a view to preach peace messages. In addition, WPC and VPC members were made to understand that conflict is normal, inevitable and that it is necessary. Yet again, members of the WPC and VPCs were made to understand that peace committees promotes community development through income generating projects. WPC and VPCs were made to understand that they should work with existing structures such as VIDCO, WADCOs, village and ward assemblies in promoting peace in the homes and villages.

There was general consensus that the five VPCs established by the PAG are indications of the effectiveness of the work done by the WPC. Owing to the WPC, the PAG are set to put in place VPCs in all the 24 villages that are left. Also, the district focal person after drawing lessons from Ward 8, he is planning to put in place a standing district peace committee to facilitate the establishment of ward peace committees in other 20 wards in Seke. Of the 20 wards left, the first targeted are 8 communal wards namely ward 1: *Nemasanga*; ward 2: *Mandedza*; ward 3: *Ngome*; ward 4: *Mutiusina zita*; ward 5: *Zhakata*; ward 6: *Chirimamhunga*; ward 7: *Mapfuti* and Ward 8: *Matiti*. The other wards are commercial

and are yet to be targeted after finishing work in the first 8 communal wards. Ward 8 was the focus of the current study.

Overall, there was a general understanding that peace is a precondition for development, meaning that if people are in conflict they do not normally cooperate and therefore development is often deterred. As such, cooperation, mutual understanding and cordial harmony were viewed as building blocks for development and these elements translate into peace. Given that the emphasis of the peace committee was on facilitating reconciliation, forgiveness and conflict resolution through dialogue it appears that some of its members may have experienced some attitude change in the way in which they now deal with conflict. For example, the motivations that if one comes across individuals or groups that are fighting or experiencing conflict, s/he should take the responsibility to try to reconcile those disputants and to see to it that they understand each other better. These aspirations can be attributed to some attitude change resulting from participating in the WPC and VPCs activities. Some members of the peace committee acknowledged that reconciling individuals engaging in a fight or squabbles was considered as something unusual but members of the peace committee felt that they have been made to understand that they should be responsible for anything that threatens peace. It appears that members of the peace committee are now being motivated by the core of peacebuilding which stresses dialoguing in the context of a conflict rather than fighting and the improvement of livelihoods through income-generating projects.

9.6 Analysis of the entire study

In order to address the major research question: *Peacebuilding among Shona communities in transition*, the following objectives were developed:

- To examine whether and under what conditions a post-violent community can become peaceful once again?
- To review the means by which peace can be built?
- To test the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8 of Seke district and to draw lessons for the future.
- To explore possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

To ascertain whether these objectives addressed the major research question, a review of related literature coupled with data collected during the course of the study were made to determine whether the findings addressed these objective and to what extent.

9.6.1 Objective 1:

To address the question of whether a post-violent community can become peaceful, the findings of this study have shown that communities are susceptible to external infiltration resulting from political systems. As such, the current study made a strong case that although communities are susceptible to influence and authority of politicized state institutions, communities have assets at their disposal that they can utilize in order to protect their vulnerability. However, a case was made in the current study that given the prevailing peace challenges facing communities, evidence suggested that communities have the capacity to recover from violence to peace. This conclusion was arrived at with examples drawn from Wajir in Kenya, Colombia, Philippines and Northern Somaliland. Thus, it was recommended that for communities to take responsibility of their own peace, they should work together and chart a preferred future as collective rather than as individual communities. Furthermore, it was recommended that peacebuilding is a joint action and thus, villages should mobilize their resources in order to take responsibility for their own peace.

9.6.2 Objective 2:

This objective reviewed the means by which peace can be built at community level. In the current study, it emerged that peacebuilding is a broad enterprise and therefore it requires a number of actors because it is multi-sectoral and multi-faceted. For that reason, this study has shown that peace can be built through sport in particular football, entrepreneurial activities and informal peace committees. Although sport and football in particular were ranked high in academic circles, in Ward 8, the improvement of livelihoods through income-generating projects emerged as one of the primary mechanisms for peacebuilding in Ward 8. As such, this objective was addressed in that participants in the current study were able to link up peacebuilding with relationship building and the improvement of livelihoods as critical elements that sustain peace at community level.

9.6.3 Objective 3:

This objective sought to test the informal peace committee framework in Ward 8 of Seke district by creating a WPC. Results of the study showed that informal peace committee are currently employing the self-selection model when setting up committees in their villages. Working with a small advisory team of 15 members inclusive of the researcher, a WPC was put in place. Subsequently, after the self-evaluation of the WPC on 16 January 2015, five VPCs were put in place in which three participated in the current study. Results have shown that the popularity of informal peace committees is built around the improvements of livelihoods and building of relationships. On this basis, informal peace committees have turned out to become one of the mechanisms that have gathered momentum in recent years both in theory

and practice of peacebuilding. Thus, the current study has recommended that the creation of peace committees is not a far-fetched project, all it requires is for the community to mobilize its human and inanimate resources and put the peace structure in place as a collective. What is unique about the self-selection model is that would-be peace committee members volunteer themselves into the committee and others still were selected on merits of good character which centres on honesty, faithfulness, wisdom and respect from their peers. In addition, it emerged that men and women occupy similar positions in LPCs as there is no gender discrimination. The study concludes that the setting up of informal LPCs is a direct response to peace challenges by communities. In Ward 8, it was noted that peace challenges which include hunger, food insecure households, unavailability of school fees, theft, stock theft and domestic violence among other social ills are major challenges which the WPC and VPCs should endeavour to address. However, due to the continued marked difference made by informal peace committees in Zimbabwe, current study has proposed that informal LPC should be part of the current national agenda to addressing the impact of electoral violence witnessed in the 2000s. The formalization process should aim to link up informal peace committees with NPRC as its main agenda is to achieve national healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The formation of district peace committees was seen as the conduit that should see informal peace committees collaborating with government. The study proposed the transformation of district peace committees into CSO in particular, to register as peace trusts in their districts. These peace trusts will act as conduit to link up NPRC with WPS and VPCs respectively. It was hoped that by adopting this model, the NPRC in Zimbabwe can potentially yield the much needed healing and reconciliation at village levels and across Zimbabwe.

9.6.4 Objective 4:

Objective 4 explored possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The findings of this study showed that despite the marked difference that has been made by informal peace committee since 2003 in promoting peaceful co-existence, tolerance, cordial harmony in some polarized communities in Zimbabwe, the transformation of informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding proves to be a challenge even until today. All stakeholders are still optimistic that government can offer support to the work of informal peace committees by formalizing them. For example, at an LPC capacity building workshop between 12 and 13 February 2015 some allusions were made that there are greater possibilities that the NPRC can transform informal LPCs established by ECLF to become formal. These sentiments were said in view of the fact that ECLF has collaborated with government through the disbanded ONHRI in conducting CPMRT sensitisation workshops throughout Zimbabwe. Drawing from this collaborative relationship between ONHRI and ECLF, I argued for possibilities of transforming informal peace committees into mainstream

peacebuilding. This notion was discussed in detail in Chapter 3. An important factor that needs to be considered regarding the transformation of informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding in Zimbabwe is that informal peace committees are relevant in that they are a direct response to peace challenges by communities. Deriving from the works of Anderson and McFarlane (2000), this study has concluded that communities in Zimbabwe should not be considered as clients to national healing and reconciliation but as partners. Thus, the formalization of informal peace committees into mainstream peacebuilding was understood as an acknowledgement that communities are partners in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.

9.7 Recommendations from the WPC

The WPC proposed that in future, the peace committee should comprise of all stakeholders in the ward such as religion, civil service, village heads and civic organizations working in the ward. This recommendation was proposed following a realization that the current Ward 8 pilot peace committee has not been able to encompass all the stakeholders in the ward. Thus, it was suggested that the involvement of various sectors in the peace committee should be viewed as a strength in that when these stakeholders come together they can identify common grounds after which they can collaborate and coordinate their activities for the good of the community. It was also recommended that although a WPC should have all the various stakeholders, the committee must have a steering committee of seven people. It was suggested that if the number of committee members exceed seven, chances are that the group can become so huge that it may end up being ineffective. For instance, it was highlighted that a committee with members adding up to 20 or more could be a potential danger as a large number of people have the propensity of fanning factionalism. And so, it was recommended that seven individuals were more manageable than 15, 20 or more peace committee members. These recommendations were made with an view to increasing the effectiveness of the WPC. However, recommendations were not meant to induce a restructuring of Ward 8 peace committee any time soon but were suggested especially focusing on the other seven communal wards in Seke which are due to have peace committees. In view of this, it was suggested that gatekeepers should involve ministers of religion, village heads and ward councillor to ensure that there is collaboration with village heads from the outset.

9.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented and analysed the results of the evaluation of the WPC. The WPC comprised of 15 members inclusive of the researcher and the results presented covered a period from 30 September 2014 to 22 July 2015. Evaluation questions sought to find out the extent to which members of the WPC have benefited from the initiative. Results of the evaluation conducted on 22 July 2015 have shown that

there was an increased knowledge on the core of peacebuilding and that members have started embarking on income-generating projects owing to the knowledge gained through the WPC. It was assumed that the lessons learnt out of the WPC and the subsequent recommendations from this evaluation will help communities to realize the need to set up peace committee in various communities in Seke and perhaps across Zimbabwe and beyond.

PART V: CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER TEN:

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the experiences of the researcher over a period of four years and the experiences of working with a small advisory team from the design, implementation and evaluation of the WPC initiative in Ward 8 of Seke district. The study concludes with recommendations for further studies to institutionalize informal peace committees at tertiary schools in Zimbabwe.

10.2 Research experiences

Since I am resident in Ward 8 of Seke district, I had regular contacts with individuals such as the provincial and district focal persons, and Pastor 00014, Mr 00015 and Mr 00017. Thus my entry into the social space to set up a WPC in Ward 8 occurred within the context of prior contacts with some of the group members I was studying. I had interacted with some members of the WPC in different social and religious forums prior to sharing the social space as stakeholders in the research process.

I used these prior contacts as my entry point into a shared social space with the group I was studying. I strongly agree with Burns *et al* (2012, p.3) that my involvement in this study had an effect on the process because of the social space that I already shared with individuals I was studying. In the context of a research study, prior contact can pose some potential risks to the shared social space. The risks border around over-familiarizations or manipulation of the process by the researcher which can potentially distort the results. Being cautious of these potentialities, I had to be honest with the district and provincial focal persons and other WPC members that I had prior contacts with. I explained to them why I preferred to work with people I knew already instead of with strangers. In essence, the merits of gaining access to individuals I had prior contacts with outweighed those of entry into individuals with whom I had no prior contacts.

At the very first stage of planning, I had to take stock of every activity of every informal meeting that we convened between Tuesday 30 September 2014 and Friday 6 November 2014. There were three major reasons why I took this responsibility from the outset. In the first place, I created a journal of activities out of necessity because we could not just let our discussions float in the air without keeping a record. In the second place, I was compelled by the fact that, there was no standing committee that worked with the

district focal person. And being the co-facilitator to the district focal person, there was no way I could have avoided recording all the discussions since the objective was to set up a pilot WPC. After the setting up of a WPC on 7 November 2014, I was officially made responsible for taking minutes and in planning with the chairperson before the start of every meeting. Additionally, I had the responsibility of transcribing all the minutes and making sure that they were ready before the next meeting. Through a series of meetings I got to understand that setting up a peace committee involves meeting people, creating time tables, making calls, consulting, reflecting, reviewing, writing minutes and rescheduling of events and procedures and sometimes getting frustrated when events failed to not turn out the way we wanted them to be.

As a result, by the time we established the WPC on 7 November 2014, a team spirit had become a major characteristic feature. There are many experiences with regard to entry into the first stage of the PAR cycle as reflected in literature. My first contact with the district focal person was the action stage into the PAR cycle. van Niekerk and van Niekerk (2009, p.137) demonstrate that: “this vital first step is aimed at establishing buy-in and project interest from community members.” Further, they point out that, it is also a stage in which the researcher becomes familiar with stakeholders. In my case, I already had prior contacts with the district focal person at personal level. However, I could not just take my prior contacts with him for granted. Research was another platform, I therefore took the responsibility to unpack the purpose of my research and why I wanted to work with him and other would-be co-researchers. After explaining the purpose of my study, we established a good working relationship that saw the setting up of a WPC in November 2014 and the subsequent creation of five VPCs in February 2015.

The formation of the WPC in Ward 8 of Seke district was a result of the initial collaborative work between the provincial and district focal persons and I. Although, the setting up of a peace committee was a success story, it was not **without hurdles**. As Santos (1991, p.77) notes, we learn from problems the same way we learn from success stories. It was my hope that reflections on problems that we encountered during the process of setting up a WPC will in one way or the other help us to improve future practice especially in processes involving the setting up VPCs in Ward 8. The major problem was that I expected the process to be quick and linear but reality on the ground proved me wrong.

As observed by Burns et al (2012, p.3), in PAR, the researcher and the stakeholders studied may have different expectations out of the collaborated process in that stakeholders may need the process to develop more slowly than what the researcher requires because researchers work with time frames. In my experience with the PAR process, initially, I had it in my plan that by April 2015, the WPC would have

finished writing the peacebuilding constitution so that I could conduct the preliminary evaluation which to me was long overdue. I could not conduct the preliminary evaluation without a peacebuilding constitution because this constitution served as a legal document for the WPC.

The month of April which I thought was going to be the very month to finish writing the constitution was the month when the first draft was written and was reviewed and adopted procedurally on 22 July 2015, which in principle was three months late. This experience was a learning curve in that when one is dealing with local community members, there is need to learn how a community works. Thus, I have come to understand that things do not just happen the way individuals want in community and members of the community cannot be pushed around. Life in the community is more habitual than cosmetic and therefore adjustment, patience, focus, commitment and courage are often the order of the day to achieve any desirable goal.

Burns et al (2012, p.3) noted that in PAR results of the study may not be in line with what the researcher expects to write in the thesis out of the process. However, in the current study, the findings that emerged were considered valid and therefore could not be altered since they were meant to be used by the WPC and VPCs. In such a scenario, I had no room whatsoever to manipulate the findings since the PAG intend to use these results as a guide for setting up about 20 more WPCs and more than 50 VPCs in the near future.

Also, as Burns *et al* (2012, p.4) notes: “the community may invest a great deal of time into the process which have little or no impact but which are largely beneficial to the researcher.” The incompatible expectations and reference points between co-researchers have the potential to increase the vulnerability of the research process. These are some of the unavoidable challenges that I grappled with throughout the research process in that although I wanted to evaluate the WPC in 2014 and close that chapter I could not avoid spilling over into 2015 because we failed to evaluate our activities in 2014. I was able to move together with my co-researchers at their pace until the last day of evaluation on 22 July 2015. Overall, I have come to an understanding that PAR is a learning process that requires course adjustment and this is a necessary requirement for anyone wishing to adopt a participatory approach to research.

10.3 Researcher as insider

The idea behind the setting up a WPC was informed by empirical evidence as Adan and Pkalya (2006, p.34) put it: “peace committees have proved to be very effective conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding structure...” Thus, in order to set up a WPC I participated in the group I was studying and I

served as a secretary of the peace committee I worked with and my responsibilities involved organizing activities related to the functions of the peace committee as well record keeping of minutes and other activities. Francis (2005, p.18) points out that: “research in which we are participants allows us to adjust our behaviour, as researchers and actors.” However, before the setting up a WPC, I had an idea of the criteria required for would-be peace committee members which I gained out of extensive literature survey. As a result, during the preparatory stages, I voiced out some of the criteria that I had come across in literature but without dominating the views of other stakeholders. Once co-opted, I performed my duties as a secretary of the peace committee as well as a researcher.

In spite of having played multiple roles - as researcher, participant observer and secretary - I was wholly committed to the successful establishment, efficiency and effective operations of the peace committee. Nevertheless, before co-option, I had full responsibility for the design of the criteria for membership into a peace committee but was not personally engaged in the co-option process which remained the preserve of the district focal person from start to finish. In particular, my task as the secretary of a peace committee was the subject matter of my study.

The purpose of working with the group I was studying was to improve the practice of setting up informal peace committees in Ward 8 of Seke district. In the words of Francis (2005, p.12) such a strategy is called ‘research in action.’ Research in action is the co-operative process involving colleagues who works collectively with a view to learn from decisions, behaviours and hands-on skills in order to improve their practice (Francis, 2005, p.14). Participant observation was on-going during meetings from 7 November 2014 to 22 July 2015. For example, on 21 November 2014, the peace committee was named by its members; *Vimbainashe Matiti Peace committee*. As the secretary, I was active in the process particularly in the recording of all the deliberations and debates surrounding the naming of the peace committee. My role as the secretary offered me the opportunity to participate in the discussion for the naming of peace committee and other activities. Besides, I was even able to voice my opinions to the group that is, I could even participate at a time where discussions were underway. Cole (1991, p.161) notes: “this is an often overlooked advantage of participant observation research.” In other words, if I was not a member of this committee, I could have negotiated for “access to minutes ... mostly stripped of the process that led to these decisions” (ibid., p.161). Since I was part of the process, I could follow up my observations through a record of minutes. Accordingly, participation as a secretary of the WPC offered me the rare opportunity to experience events and discussions as they were unfolding something which could have been extremely impossible to access if I was an outsider. By serving as a secretary of a peace committee as well as a researcher, I was “given a legitimate authorization to collect data” (Cole, 1991, p.162). Probing for clarity

once consensus was reached was part of my task during meetings. In doing so, members of the peace committee afforded me the opportunity to understand group dynamics, something that I could not have access to if I was not a member of the WPC.

Cole (1991, p.162) cautions that: “being overwhelmed by too much data can be one of the disadvantages of being in such a data-rich situation.” Much as I could become overwhelmed by the process, I was careful to bear this cost in that occasionally, I subsumed interview technique under participation observation by asking the group to clarify on what they had agreed upon and actions to be taken.

In literature, little attention has been paid to participant observation in processes involving the setting up of peace committees. I have found participant observation a suitable technique in processes involving the setting up of a peace committee in Ward 8. As a result of my position as a secretary and participant observer with *Vimbainashe Matiti Peace Committee* for nine consecutive months which ended on 22 July 2015, I have come to appreciate the role of participant observation in the setting up of informal peace committees. As Cole (1991, p.163) notes “any researcher conducting some form of participant observation research faces the question of how to present oneself to the research subjects.” I did not experience these ethical dilemmas because from the outset, I had made it clear both to the provincial and district focal persons that I was going to play the role of a facilitator while ordinary people were to lead the process. Also, building on my prior contacts, the WPC was willing to work with me especially that I held the position of a researcher. When I opted to take up the position of secretary instead of deputy chair of the WPC, I was not violating the selection procedures at community level because in the self-selection process interested members can request certain positions. This explains why I had to make a request to the district focal person to take up the position of a secretary which I felt was more suitable for me at that present moment. To the rest of the members of the WPC, they did not collaborate with me blindly, the chairperson of the peace committee provided details again and again that I was involved in a research together with the WPC during our meetings as he was now conversant with the PAR process.

Nevertheless, there were a couple of events such as making calls to remind other committee members about the next day of the meeting, taking photos, transport costs and a donation of 15 t/shirts which became my sole responsibility. To cite but one of the many examples, I paid for transport which ferried peace committee members to the councillor’s residents following an appointment with him on the 28th of November 2014. Although I was aware that each committee member was responsible for his/her transport hire, I knew a lot more about the financial constraints because the majority of peace committee members are not on regular employment. On my own initiative, I volunteered to pay the hiring fare of US\$15 after

explaining to the deputy chairperson that members need not to worry about paying for transport costs. Since I was part of the group, all members of the peace committee perceived and interpreted this as a contribution, a gesture to share the work load by another committee member.

Occasionally, I volunteered to take group photos after formal meetings and I would give each member a group photo for free. In my view these activities were perceived as a share of the workload on a voluntary basis to assist the newly formed peace committee to build its own history. The group accepted this gesture because they perceived it as a gesture by a fellow committee member. I also volunteered to donate printed t/shirts with the name of the WPC at the back and a logo at the front for the 15 members as part of my contribution to peacebuilding in Ward 8. These t/shirts were distributed to the 15 WPC members on 22 July 2015 after the adoption of the peacebuilding constitution. On this basis, I had “no problems to establish legitimacy” (Cole, 1991, p.164) to the WPC in terms of collecting data. In my report, I maintained my pledge to withhold names of participants and informants while using names of those who so preferred.

Working with people that I was familiar with often runs the risk of being subsumed by the group without realizing it. Occasionally, I used to make public statements whenever I saw it fit to remind the group that I was a researcher. In my view, “this understanding of my role had little impact to the content of what was said in public meetings, who would talk to me or what they would say” (Cole, 1991, p.163) because I tried to behave as any other member of the WPC would do such as attending meetings, thinking critically, reflecting, voicing my opinions and making collaborative decisions. For that reason, it was not easy for fellow peace committee members to consider me an outsider given the long journey that we walked together as the secretary of the WPC. Thus, in almost every meeting and interactions with the WPC members, I was careful to behave like any other committee member.

10.4 Conclusions on the concept of peace

The study found out that Shona conceptions of peace fall within two broad categories introduced in the current study: *the-yet-peace* and *not-yet-peace* thesis. The former represents peace that villages in Ward 8 are familiar with, that is living together, getting along, or good relations. It is within this category of peace where we preach that conflict is inevitable and therefore alternative ways of addressing conflict should be sought after in order to address conflict without the use of violence. This is the kind of peace that we are familiar with. *The-yet-peace* does not remove conflict in the villages but embraces it as part of life. In other words, we live side by side with conflict and conflict is not an antithesis of peace. In contrast, the *not-yet-peace* paradigm has images of villages without conflict, without offenders, villages having enough

food and everyone living happily. These are visions for a preferred future by Shona people. The important thing about images of a preferred future is that individuals and groups develop strategies to achieve these aspirations and an LPC formation is one such strategy in Ward 8. Thus, the creation of WPC and VPCs are response mechanisms towards the achievement of peace aspirations.

10.5 Conclusions on the concept of peacebuilding

Overall, this study found out that peacebuilding does not seek to eliminate conflict. The step of peacebuilding is the assumption that conflict is a fact of life. Within this framework, peacebuilding was understood as a process that seeks to create an environment which inculcates respect, trust, unity, co-existence and cooperation so that when conflict occurs people are able to dialogue with each other and move forward in a more respectful and cooperative manner. As such the establishment of LPCs was understood as a response mechanism aimed at building peace between individuals and groups so that peace is realized.

The second port of call for peacebuilding was that, if a conflict occurs against the background of strained relationships characterized by hatred, animosity or antagonism, such a conflict can cause devastating effects and even death can occur under such conditions. So peacebuilding was considered an ideal multi-purposed process in that through peacebuilding trust, respect, mutual understanding, unity and cooperation between individuals and groups can potentially be inculcated prior to a, during or after a conflict has occurred. The study concludes that if a conflict occurs between individuals or groups that are already respecting each other, in most cases such a conflict does not become so extreme to the extent of destroying life because respect, trust, co-existence can be a good starting point for some disputants. However, it does not follow that people who respect each other will not experience conflict. Conflict is experienced by everyone and is everywhere. This study concluded that a conflict that occurs within a respectful relationship, when people are already understanding each other, tolerating each other and mutually trusting each other, such a conflict can also be harmful but not as extreme as a conflict which occurs when people are already experiencing antagonism. Conflict that occurs between individuals or groups that have proved to be antagonists prior to the conflict is not only complex but also very dangerous and destructive. The complexity is that for anyone intervening in such a conflict it may not be easy to unearth the history, context and triggers of the conflict and therefore, it takes much more effort and time to unearth previous antagonism, animosities and mistrust that may have sustained the conflict.

Building peace creates an environment conducive for individuals and groups to respect each other, to mutually trust one another, cooperate and co-exist so that in the event that conflict occurs tomorrow, such

individuals have the option of using prior respect, mutual trust, co-operation and co-existence to forge dialogue if they so wish to do so. This is different with individuals who engage in a conflict in an already antagonistic type of relationship, the next thing they may think of is perhaps to find ways to win over the perceived opponent. This explains why the history of the conflict is important because interveners are able to pick the type of relationships prior to the conflict. Thus, peacebuilding seeks to inculcate an environment characterized by love, respect, tolerance; co-existence so that when conflict comes again tomorrow disputants may have a better platform characterized by prior respect, trust and tolerance to work on their differences. In that sense, it is the nature of relationships prior to the conflict that determined how much effort and time would be needed to address the conflict at hand.

10.6 Conclusions on community-led peace initiatives

Out of a hands-on experience of working with small advisory team of 14 members in Ward 8 of Seke district this study concludes in agreement with Swanepoel (1992) that community peace initiatives are often small and simple. Community-led initiatives are small in that they are not complex. One of their distinguishing characteristics is that usually they do not involve official bureaucratic structures but local structures that are within the community. A case in point is the setting up of informal LPC which often involves ordinary people both men and women sometimes sitting under a tree but creating something substantial. Such initiatives are usually guided by culture specific cultural norms and values and that is what makes them more informal but legitimate in their host communities. In addition, community-led initiatives are simple in that they involve ordinary people with common interest and are all engaged in mutual policing and thus what makes the initiative more sustainable. However, the important thing about community peace initiatives is that although they are small and simple, they address the community's basic needs and challenges.

One of the peace challenges that stood out in this study were episodic violent cases that often take place during election times especially between 2000 and 2008. The form that episodic violence often take is usually interpersonal in that some individuals within the village settle their personal vendettas during election period through arson, beatings, destruction of properties belonging to the perceived opponent **who might be ZANU or MDC**. The overriding view by the WPC and VPCs was that these **different forms of episodic violence were** within the power of Ward 8 and their respective villages to nip in the bud if VPCs continue to work in unison with villages. Overall, the WPC and VPC in Ward 8 was construed as a vehicle that provides villagers with an understanding of how to take responsibility of their own peace, to embark on income generating projects, produce their own food in order to address peace challenges bedevilling their community.

10.7 Conclusions on the creation of VPCs

This study concludes that the processes involving the setting up of VPCs should apply the principle of: *from the known to the unknown*, that is to say, facilitators should start with someone whom they know already. WPC members spearheading to setting up of VPCs should play the role of facilitators while community members should lead the process and the following suggested steps should serve as a guide:

1). *Develop the purpose of the VPC*: the purpose should be developed in view of the goals of the VPC and these goals should centre on the question of what constitutes an effective VPC.

2). *Develop criteria*. There are five basic criteria elements namely:

- a) Facilitators should identify expected behaviours that are compatible with peacebuilding. For example, the would-be peace committee member must have facilitated a conflict which resulted in disputants considering reconciliation as an option. The ability to facilitate a conflict should serve as a yardstick of expected behaviours of a peace builder from the positive side. In contrast, expected behaviours should embrace the notion that a peace builder should be someone free from deviant behaviours such as fighting, stealing, and quick tempered and exercising self-control.
- b) any would-be peace committee member should have the ability to attend peace committee meetings. On the basis of this criterion members should be considered suitable for their experiences of working in or with community structures. Those individuals that served in community structures with a record of absenteeism should be considered unsuitable candidates. For those that qualify, the facilitator and the village representatives should agree that such an individual must have served in any community committee for a specified period of time failure of which such an individual cannot serve in a peace committee.
- c) Ascertain the candidate's satisfaction to work on voluntary basis and willingness to achieving the interests of community. This criterion is critical in that it represent how a would-be peace committee feels and think about his/her position and participation in the peace committee whether s/he has positive or negative feelings about the duties involved.
- d) Determine whether the would-be peace committee member feels emotionally attached to the peace committee, whether s/he perceives the position in the peace committee as an economic incentive or has a sense of moral obligation to serve in the committee. This criterion will assist the familiar and village representatives to have some basic knowledge of the various motives that individuals have to occupy positions in the peace committee. For example, those individuals who demonstrate emotional attachment and a sense of obligations are likely to stay longer in the peace committee in spite of emerging challenges. While those who perceive positions in a peace committee as an economic incentive are induced by benefits and are likely to relinquish the post if they perceive that expected benefits are not forthcoming.

3. *Secure buy-in from the community*. The bottom-line is the process should be owned by the villagers.

4. *Community involvement*: The community must be involved in setting up the VPC.

5. *Blueprint*: There should be a blueprint for VPC capacity building workshops by facilitators to work out terms of references in collaboration with the VPC. At this workshop the facilitator should advise VPC to build a skills inventory for its members in order to make sense of the knowledge and competencies that each individual has in the area of peacebuilding. A skills inventory is a good starting point for the VPC to have an inward-looking and to assess its capacity to address the needs of the community.

10.8 Conclusions on Mukando and peacebuilding constitutions

The *Mukando* constitution is a relevant peacebuilding mechanism that enhances inward looking for communities such as Ward 8 that are currently experiencing economic doldrums. This constitution provides cohesion framework for the WPC. Owing to the increasing demand in local community empowerment, WPC adopted the *Mukando* scheme as a legal framework for social cohesion and group interests. The value of this constitution lies in its ability to promoting social cohesion, sharing of resources through borrowing and paying back on interest and learning from each others' experiences. The *Mukando* scheme is a valuable asset for local community members in particular for peacebuilders because it provides all the members with financial management skills as well as entrepreneurial expertise. The objective of the constitution is to provide an enabling environment for members of the scheme to manage group interests as well as asserting self-reliance.

An integral element is the institution of fines to defaulting members as reflected in item 7: *Absence without just cause*. Boulding (2000, p.29) argues that different groups have different ways of dealing with defaulters. Imposing financial fines to defaulters is one of the non-aggression strategies of restoring group cohesion reflected in the *Mukando* constitution. In this constitution, defaulting members pay R5 for absconding meetings without a just cause (see Appendix 11). In some sense, the fines stated in the *Mukando* constitution serve as a mutual policing mechanism, which is aimed at enhancing the peacebuilding capacity of the *Mukando* scheme. In view of these conclusions, this study recommends that the WPC should integrate the *Mukando* and peacebuilding constitutions as this has the potential of expanding the peacebuilding potential of local communities given that *Mukando* was singled out as one of the projects that falls squarely within peacebuilding. There is further need for training of WPC members who have not received *Mukando* schemes training.

Finally, *Mukando* and peacebuilding constitutions should be signed by the chief, the Ward councillor in order to make them official documents. By the time of writing of this report, the WPC was making efforts to present these constitutions to the chief after which they could ask him to put his signature, thus making them legitimate and more binding.

10.9 Conclusions on the sustainability of the work started

It was noted in this study that among the members of the WPC, social capital was a critical factor and in fact it was instrumental in the creation of the Ward 8 peace committee. Thus, the existing social networks, obligations, expected behaviours and privileges between members of the WPC and VPCs suggests possibilities of sustainability. The features of sustainability include mutual policing and a sense of

community. This study therefore argues that the creation of an LPC in Ward 8 is a demonstration of a sense of community by members of the community in Seke to take responsibility of their own peace.

10.10 Conclusions on how Shona culture directly helped the WPC and VPCs in Ward 8

It was noted in this study that culture is how a particular people group do things. Simply put, culture determines whether a community is peaceful or violent. Of particular importance to note is that every culture contains celebrated values, beliefs and attitudes, on one hand, on the other, the same culture has some shadows, meaning that every culture has some elements imbedded in its values, beliefs and attitudes that can perpetrate violent behaviours.

Among the rural Shona, social values are centered on the concept of *unhu* (good manners) which involves respect to other peoples, mercy, friendliness, food sharing, non-revenge and collectivity among other values. And thus, the instrumentality of Shona social values to the formation and aspirations of Ward 8 LPC is beyond any reasonable doubt when we consider how Shona values are replicated by WPC in the Peace building constitution (See Appendix 13, section 1.13). One of the prime values in Shona culture is love and was bundled together with honesty, peace, kindness, non-revenge, harmony, reconciliation, all of which are important values for peace at community level. A good number of Shona social values were reviewed in Chapter Four. The shared desire for peace was instrumental in bringing together the WPC to address peace challenges affecting their community. The capacity to mobilize each other to conduct meetings and to lobby for the setting up of VPCs was a demonstration of the values of peace, harmony, and a shared concern for cohesion. In their constitution, the WPC spelled it out that whenever a conflict occurs it should be handled through a facilitated dialogue and this is akin to a Shona customary court. Central to peacebuilding as understood by the WPC is the promotion of good relations and creating space and opportunities for entrepreneurship and human endeavours and these aspects are cardinal to Shona culture. Anderson and McFerlane (2000, p. 159) assert that community life is built around values, beliefs and traditions. If the above proposition is anything to go by, this study can safely conclude that the WPC has derived its peacebuilding potential from Shona culture.

10.11 Generalising the results

While the results of this study cannot all be generalised for all communities across the globe, it is important to note that some aspects of the results, in particular, those involving the issue of sustainability of formations such as LPCs at village level have a universal application. This is so because as the findings have shown, this study concludes that sustainability of community-led initiatives will always be guaranteed by the level of participation and ownership by the host village. The self-selection model is

one of the features of participation and ownership of initiatives by members of the village. Participation by members of the village is not context specific it can be applied across communities. However, what is context specific are variables such as peace challenges because they vary from one village to another. Thus, any community willing to take responsibility for its own peace can find these results helpful particularly on issues to do with participation and ownership through the self-selection process. Overall, when addressing peace challenges at village level the self-selection process can be a useful mechanism for the sustainability of any community-led initiative. This was true of the WPC and VPC formations in Ward 8 of Seke district.

10.12 Recommendations

In order to develop means by which peace can be built at community level in Ward 8, the following recommendations have been proffered.

10.12.1 The institutionalization of informal peace committees at universities in Zimbabwe

Most institutions that are offering peace studies programmes in Zimbabwe such as Africa University, Bindura University, or Zimbabwe Open University, have tended to focus on peacebuilding at the macro-level without focusing on informal peace committees in the villages. What this suggests is that informal peace committees seem not to have caught the academic attention at university level. This study therefore recommends that universities should institutionalize centres for informal peace committees in which community members should be provided with resources to help them to respond appropriately to peace challenges affecting communities in Zimbabwe.

10.12.2 Informal peace committees

In the area of informal peace committees, universities are known to have well-established student representative unions whose principal roles are to represent the interests of students and their welfare while at university. History has it that most student unions have turned violent when in conflict with university authorities. That being the case, this study recommends that it is time in this peacebuilding conscious context, that universities in Zimbabwe make use of this readily available resource for peacebuilding at universities through the institutionalization of informal peace committees to represent the interest of students. It is hoped that if these peace committees make use of conflict resolution skills that are often at the disposal of peace committees some clashes between university students and the relevant authorities can be mitigated from escalating into violence.

10.13 Chapter summary

This chapter concluded the entire study with experiences of the researcher over a period of four years of working with a small advisory team. Of particular importance to this study was that the researcher worked with individuals whom he was already familiar with. Given that the study established a peace committee, there was no way I could have avoided working with people I was familiar with because I was one of the committee members. As a committee, we were able to influence each other back and forth and this helped to validate the finding of the current study. At the very long last, the study found out that the primary function of informal peace committee is to building peace in communities. It was concluded that peacebuilding does not seek to eliminate conflict but to create an environment where people respect, tolerate, trust each other and co-exist so that when conflict occurs within such a social arrangement it has the potential to yield a peaceful means such as dialoguing because people that respect each other can shy away from confronting each other but can't shy away from dialoguing. A social arrangement characterized with positive social values has the propensity to yield dialogue as a means of addressing conflict. However, it was noted that this social arrangements need not to be taken for granted when a conflict occurs but all efforts and energy should be directed towards the addressing of conflict through dialogue and the improvement of livelihoods.

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APPENDIX 1: UKZN ETHICAL CLEARANCE



21 April 2014

Mr Norman Chivasa 206529417
School of Accounting, Economics & Finance
Westville Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1172/011D
Project title: "Peacebuilding among Shona communities in transition in Zimbabwe: A participatory action research"

Dear Mr Chivasa

Approval - Change of project title

I wish to confirm that your application in connection with the above mentioned project has been approved.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shonuka Singh (Chair)

/pk

cc Supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Harold Ngwenya
cc School Administrator: Shile Khuzwayo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

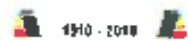
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APPENDIX 2: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



28 October 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to confirm that Mr. Norman Chivasa is currently enrolled as a PhD student, Peace Studies, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. His research is investigating the establishment of local peace committees at village levels. This is a key component of his PhD study.

Your assistance to Mr. Chivasa will be highly appreciated. We anticipate his research to be very valuable for building more peaceful communities.

Yours truly,


Dr. Sylvia Kaye, Supervisor
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Edgewood	Howard College	Nelsmaritzburg	Westville

APPENDIX 3: SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE

1. What do you think now about the concept of peace committee?
2. What do you think about procedures and methods that were used for setting up a peace committee in Ward 8 of Seke district?
3. What have you benefitted or not out of all the peace committee meetings that were convened between 7 November 2014 and 27 December 2014?
4. What are some of the major challenges that you experienced between 7 November 2014 and 27 December 2014?
Probe: How can these challenges be addressed?
5. What overall suggestions would you make for the future?

END

APPENDIX 4: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is your general understanding of peacebuilding?
2. In your own opinion do you think peacebuilding and community development are related or not and in which way?
3. What methods do you think the ward peace committee should use to build peace?
4. What should members of the peace committee do to sustain the ward peace committee?
5. What are your overall recommendations to the ward peace committee?

END

APPENDIX 5: NARRATORS GUIDE



To: Narrators

Dear Participant

Your assistance is highly sort to narrate and share with me your experiences in the establishment of Local Peace Committees/Local Peace Councils and their functions to help me get information solely for academic purposes regarding LPCs/PCs at community level. Your experiences is intended to give peacebuilding practitioners and this study in particular, a picture of how various peace builders have established LPCs/PCs. It is hoped that through your participation in this study by way of narrating your good and bad experiences regarding LPCs/PCs, other peace builder and peace researchers will benefit and help to improve future peacebuilding endeavours in Zimbabwe and beyond.

- Can you say your preferred pseudo name(s) [which I can use in my research report] and then narrate any information you may want to share with me about LPCs?
- 1. Could you please narrate your good and bad experiences regarding the processes involved in the establishment of a LPC starting with:
 - ✓ Criteria for setting up a LPC
 - ✓ Recruitment procedures
 - ✓ and time-frames,
 - ✓ aims and functions of established LPCs?
- 2. What do you recommend as the BEST way forward for anyone wishing to establish a LPC in order to achieve what you would consider as the best results?

*Would you please share with me your bio data: Age; Position in the organization, No. of years with the organization and educational qualifications. [A maximum of 2 pages]. **Thank you in advance.***

Could you please send the information to my email or write it on paper, then we will make arrangements on how I can get this information to me. My email: normanchivasa@gmail.com

Yours truly,

Norman Chivasa

Contacts: 0772246188

APPENDIX 6: EVALUATION GUIDE

1. Before the ward peace committee was put in place in Ward 8, how did you understand it?
2. Now that a peace committee was put in place how do you understand it
3. What were some of the proven benefits of having established the ward peace committee?
4. How do you understand peacebuilding now?
5. If a peace committee is to be established in future what do you think should be done?

END

APPENDIX 7: STORIES OF REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES ON INFORMAL PEACE COMMITTEES

NARR.0001

My name is Programmes Manager NARR.0001.

I facilitated the establishment of peace committees in District 1 (for Mutare Rural District); District 2 (Mutasa Rural District), District 3 (for Buhera Rural District) under the auspices of Peacebuilding Foundation (PF) (pseudo organizational name).

Could you please narrate your good and bad experiences regarding the processes involved in the establishment of a LPC/PC/Assembly starting with the criteria, recruitment procedures and time-frames, aims and functions of an established LPC/PC/Assembly?

The establishment of a Participatory Community Forum (PCF) known as Peace Committee in other civil society organizations followed the following criteria: It was Ward based, whereby a ward is a politically determined grassroots territory under the leadership of an elected local government representative known as a Councillor. The Councillor was the gatekeeper or the entry point for the Peacebuilding Foundation activities. He/she invited community members through their traditional leadership to attend a Public Meeting whereby the PF representatives would address the community members explaining what PF was and its aims and objectives as well as values. The most important value that was stressed was non-partisanship. This value was critical in the context of high levels of political polarization. When the community members agreed to work with PF they went into different community sectors such as traditional leaders, women's groups, religious groups, business people, war veterans, political party representatives, youth, people living with HIV among others. Thus, community sectors would choose four people to represent them in the PCF. They had to ensure that where applicable, take gender equity considerations seriously by choosing 2 women and 2 men. Community participation was critical at this stage to ensure inclusivity and nonpartisan nature of the PCF. The reasons why PF decided to establish a PCF was in order to enhance community dialogue in a nonpartisan platform, to ensure that there is continued presence and reminder for the need for peace in communities concerned even when PF's personnel (Field Diplomacy) and to provide a platform for early warning systems in that the PCF members would relay information to PF about potential conflicts developing in their communities. PCF spearheaded and encouraged ward development work when political structures had been paralyzed by polarization.

Approximately how many LPC's/PCs have you established over the years, how long did it take you to establish and how many are still functional?

District 1 (24 PCF); District 2 (21 PCF), District 3 (18 PCF). In order to establish a PCF, it took PF the following levels of activities: Organizing Visit (this is a pre-Public Meeting visit to the key community leaders, especially the Councillor and some of the traditional leaders including political party representatives) to convince them about the work to be done and its value in bringing communities together and spearheading community development. The second activity was the Public Meeting in which all ward residents are invited to attend and listen to PF representatives addressing them followed by a question and answer session that will clarify and correct unrealistic expectations. Once the community members accept PF to work in the ward, they are immediately divided into specific Community Sectors e.g. War Veterans whereby they would choose 4 people to represent them in the PCF. Immediately after the names and contacts of the selected representatives are given to PF personnel, they agree on the date of the first Training which focuses normally on Conflict Transformation with emphasis on the importance of peace for development. Normally, it would take a week between the Public Meeting and the Conflict Transformation workshop. After the first workshop a Second workshop followed focusing on Community Building and Leadership. This is governance and leadership focused training emphasizing the need for authentic, tolerant and inclusive type of leadership in order to build a community. Communities are built not by isolating others and emphasizing exclusive identities such as party affiliations at the expense of a community's common identity.

The third and final workshop was called Community Participation. The emphasis of this training is to stress the need for community members' participation in the processes of decision making and implementation. Leaders are made aware that they are accountable to their communities and the sectors they represent more than they are accountable to other structures outside their community areas. On the final day of this training workshop a Committee is elected by the participants. It would consist of a Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and his/her Deputy as well as a Committee Members. Their roles are spelt out and a Plan of Action is developed together with the entire group reflecting the needs of the whole community.

How do conflicts get to LPCs/PCs/Assembly?

Each Community Sector representative would take up issues from their specific sectors and present them to the Committee during meetings and deliberations take place. When there were issues that needed urgent attention yet beyond the scope of the PCF, the meeting would refer to the relevant community structures and then would task some of their own to be responsible for follow up on progress of on the issues. In some of their meetings they would notify the PF's representative who if available would join them and encourage them or give them technical support and coaching. That way the capacity of the leaders was enhanced.

Using your own experiences which are some of the conflicts commonly handled by LPC/PC/Assemblies?

The PCF handled a variety of conflicts that include the following: Corruption, land boundary disputes, stock thefts, stalled development of community projects, political violence, access to markets for community produce etc.

Could you please describe how these conflicts are often handled?

Every PCF handled their conflicts depending on each situation. In one case for example a local police officers were accused of covering up a case of stock theft and the PCF advised the community member concerned to report the matter to the next higher level camp till the stolen cow was recovered. Land disputes were sensitive but community dialogue was used to hear the inputs of the community members and then find out how the appropriate traditional leader would take them up. Stalled development projects were issues brought to a Community Dialogue session and the community members would stress the issue as a priority that would need urgent attention. Thereafter, the PCF committee would mobilize community members with the support of traditional leaders to continue or complete work. Such projects included school building blocks, road repairs among others.

Are there any types of conflicts that are not handled by LPC/PCs which are these and why?

There was no conflict that the PCF did not handle except that they only handled them at the levels of their scope. For example in a certain community after the 2008 political violence and one group of people lost their chickens, goats and food reserves to the other group and then after the 2008 Global Political Agreement and Inclusive Government was in place, the alleged victims went around door to door reclaiming their lost items, a team of Anti-riot police was quickly dispatched and some of the leaders were arrested and charged in court though later released due to the political nature of the background. However, as soon as the matter was in the hands of the police and court system and political leaders asked the communities to wait for the establishment of a National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration framework, the PCF could not do anything further to this regard. Other issues the PCF did not resolve included rape cases and other criminal cases in which they referred to the police for further investigation and arrest where possible.

What do you recommend as the BEST way forward for anyone wishing to establish a LPC/PC/Assembly in order to achieve what you would consider as the best results?

The best way forward I would recommend are as follows: ensure community participation in the selection of the PCF members for accountability and acceptance of the team. Secondly, ensure that the facilitators act in a nonpartisan manner before, during and after the trainings in order to gain respect of all the parties involved. In addition, PCF need constant support both technically (through further training and coaching) as well as materially (t-shirts, certificates and other IEC material). Finally, work with existing and established structures such as police, traditional leadership and political parties. Above all, ensure there are Memoranda of Understanding with the District Leadership before entering particular wards in the

district. The PCF aims and objectives and functions should include promoting nonviolent approaches to dealing with conflicts, providing space for dialogue and community healing, representing community priorities with government representatives and other development partners. Act as an early warning system for conflicts and development needs and disasters. Finally, they should promote good governance/leadership and respect for human rights.

What would you recommend as the ideal aims and realistic functions of LPCs/PCs/Assemblies in future?

The above recommendations apply. My only addition is that PCFs should be understood as temporary structures in situations when other structures are dysfunctional. Otherwise, the existing governance structures should include peacebuilding and conflict transformation as part of their being.

NARR.0002: Mr Samuel Maruta

Personal Reflections on the Efficacy of Community-based Peacebuilding Formations in Zimbabwe

Introduction

Within the last two decades or so, efforts have been directed at building local peacebuilding structures in conflict-ridden and conflict-prone communities in many parts of the world. These structures are formed either as a reaction to a particular conflict, in which case their main purpose is to contribute to the management of the conflict and to post-conflict peacebuilding.

Alternatively, the structures can be formed as a precautionary measure rather than as a direct response to a particular conflict, in which case their main purpose is to prevent the eruption or escalation of nascent micro-level disputes into violent and more widespread conflicts. The former are invariably peace committees whose members are official representatives of the sides to the conflict, while the latter can be the same peace committees similarly constituted or peace clubs/ associations whose members are volunteers from all walks of life in the community in question and with no official mandate from the groups that they might nonetheless belong to.

In Zimbabwe, both types of community-based peacebuilding formations have been set up in diverse communities at varying times over the last decade and half. However for the purpose of this paper, the writer will focus more on peace clubs/ associations since this is the type of formation that he is more familiar with having been involved in the conceptualisation, building and management of such structures for almost a decade now. The purpose of the paper was to show that community-based formations can be effective community peacebuilding tools in Zimbabwe given a conducive environment.

Reach and scope of work

By reach we mean the coverage that the peace club can achieve in terms of both the geographic extent of its area of jurisdiction as well as the number of people in the community that access its services. It could also be taken to mean the depth to which an intervention can go in terms of the historical background and roots of the conflict as well as the psyche of the community in question. On the other hand by scope we mean the range of conflict types that the club can handle, beginning with the interpersonal and often domestic type of conflicts going onto community-wide and often political types of conflicts. Peace clubs can reach a lot more people than other strategies in the communities in which they operate, especially those interventions planned and implemented from outside. Because it is based in the community and therefore there most if not all the time, members of the community have access to it almost as and when a need arises. This applies whether the people concerned are the victims and/or perpetrators to tell their stories, neutrals to contribute ideas to the resolution of the conflict, or the general population to input ideas into a long term peacebuilding strategy. And because members of the peace clubs are ordinary local people, they have access to people and situations in the community that outsiders would not have. For example, they can link the process with a cross-section of the community, both vertically to include the top echelons, ordinary residents and everybody in between, and horizontally across all social divisions. This gives them access to information and opportunities to resolve the conflicts or build peace that are not available to outsiders. By the same token, they know the history of the area and the conflict in question, and have an in-depth (albeit) instinctive understanding of the collective mentality of the community, factors that play a subliminal yet crucial role in the nature and progression of the conflict. However for these things to happen as intended, much depends on a number of factors relating to the composition and internal dynamics of the club. The most important factor with respect to composition is the calibre of people that make up the club; this relates to issues of personality, status in the community, level of education and degree of maturity among others. Naturally people are more prepared to heed the advice and censure of those that they look up to or respect in some way. The internal dynamics of the club hinge on the extent to which members are prepared to work together, to which the club itself is at peace with itself. This often emanates from a clash of personalities or divergence in understanding the vision and mission of the club and the parent organisation. Thus at the formation stage of the club, a lot of attention and effort must be expended in selecting the right calibre of would-be members of the club, and educating them on the vision and mission of the club and the nature of its work before taking them in. For example, the members recruited must have the ability to perform the vertical link role, to work with all manner of people in the community, to function as a cohesive unit and, perhaps above all, to stay the course as the work ahead is not an overnight event. Notwithstanding the above, however, peace clubs often do not have the capacity to deal directly with political level conflicts. This limitation is especially noticeable during election time when political polarisation in communities takes centre stage. Even peace committees

formed mainly of members of different political parties are often found wanting during these times. This paralysis is mainly due to the fact that these types of conflicts are usually instigated from outside of the community by people at a higher level within the political formations involved, such that the local political functionaries merely follow orders. Yet the lower level social conflicts that the local peacebuilding formations often deal with contribute to the political stability or otherwise of the community as they are the fodder on which the political polarisation feeds. Thus the more effective they are at the lower levels of social interaction and relationships the more relevant their work becomes at the higher levels in the community.

Cost effectiveness

The issue of cost effectiveness relates to the amount of output achieved for every unit of input expenditure, usually in terms of dollars and person hours. Compared to peacebuilding projects run directly by an external agency, a local peace club is relatively less expensive. Much of the money spend by an external agency with respect to the budget of the project goes to budget items that have no direct output on the ground, such as travel to and from the community often in very costly-to-run vehicles, field allowances for the often highly paid staff of the agency, office expenses of the agency and telephone costs. The more direct output-related expenses include food and refreshments, venue fees and local logistics for meetings and workshops which constitute a much smaller proportion of the total cost of the project. Even with respect to meeting venue fees, peace clubs can secure free venues, or at least low-cost or discounted, by virtue of the fact that they are a community-based organisation rather than an NGO that is usually perceived as outsiders and to have a lot of money; in addition, they can easily use existing community infrastructure because it is theirs too. Thus if the project is carried out by the local formation, it would cost far less in direct expenses. This is not to say that the external agency has no place. Far from it. Rather the point is that there is a cost reduction benefit to be enjoyed if the local formation is given a leading role in the planning and implementation of project activities.

When it comes to local protocol, local peace clubs are the best. This involves liaising with the local authorities and other organisations working in the area, mobilising participants from among the local population, and organising venues and supplies among other things. Members of the local peace clubs know who to contact and when, and the procedures to follow in order to get the best results. Such seemingly mundane issues as knowledge of the village head's totem and how to praise-sing it becomes crucial at times. The members are also better placed to return if either the person being sought is not available at the time of the initial visit, or if the issues need further deliberation at a later time. The club members involved in these logistics can make some of these visits in the course of their daily routines and therefore do not have to spend extra money specifically for the transaction in question. Thus they easily level the ground for the work, and lubricate the process. In the end, therefore, the little money that is spent

directly on the project by the peace club produces far more than the large sums of money spent by the external agency operating on its own.

Needless to say that unfortunately some external agencies take advantage of this calculus to exploit the local peace clubs to their own advantage. This exploitation may take the form of hiding the in-kind contributions of the local peace clubs, or the numerous hours of donkey work put in by their members, from the project accounts which nevertheless go on to reflect large sums of money not actually spent. The point here is that when the money is available, it should be spent more at the local level by the local peace clubs involved; when money is short, the work should still continue as most of it does not require direct expenditure. Donors should also facilitate this accounting approach by allowing, in their reporting requirements, their partner NGOs to sign over some of the project money to their partnering local community-based organisations, without expecting these local formations to produce sophisticated accounts. Thus certain levels of natural trust and risk acceptance need to be built into such relationships for win-win outcomes on all fronts – financial, project outcomes and sustainability.

Ownership and sustainability

Because in Zimbabwe peace committees are formed of representatives of conflicting political parties and arms of government such as the police, rarely do they blend organically into the community. This is because they are an institution apart from the normal life of the community.

On the other hand, because peace clubs are formed of ordinary members of the community, they are organically blended into the community, even though they may not have achieved wide acceptance at a given point in time. This is because they are part of the everyday life of the community, especially in rural areas where every going-on gets to be known by everyone around, not least the village head. Furthermore with particular reference to the rural areas, no outside organisation carries out a project without the express authority of the local traditional authority who often asks his/her people if they want the project before giving his/her final word.

Thus the project is rejected or accepted up front. And if it is accepted, the more the peace club works in the community, with the community and for the community, the more the community co-owns its work and is predisposed to carry it forward with or without the participation and/or support of the external agency that might have initiated it. While this local ownership and sustainability might happen of its own accord, often it has to be planned for and built into the process at the formation stage. There are at least two negative forces at play here militating against automatic ownership and sustainability. In Zimbabwe today, many communities have become so donor-dependent that one is to be forgiven for thinking that they have lost the ability to survive and thrive on their own. This donor syndrome must be declared enemy number one right from the start of a project, both in words but especially in deed. For example, aspiring members of the club must be told that they will work on a voluntary basis and that they will pay

a fee to join and remain members of the club. This would help to drive home the point that they will be expected to give before they can receive. This giving, whether in cash or kind, can be a strong motivator for them to own and carry on with the project through thick and thin. It will also motivate them to give their all – energy, creativity, time, etc. – to make the project a success.

Enemy number two is selfishness. Many people in Zimbabwe today are so bent on immediate gratification, victims of the ‘what is in it for me– now’ syndrome that they will not participate in anything that does not promise to yield a clear, tangible and immediate benefit for them with little or no investment in cash, time or effort. While self-preservation is a natural instinct, most of the human progress recorded in history, whether at the individual or collective level, has been founded on self-interest, which is in a sense constructive selfishness. This is where a person undertakes something apparently beneficial to another while strategically calculated to benefit him/herself as well, at a higher return. After all this is the essence of business and politics too, to win together. Any individualistic and selfish win, most glorious though it might be, is not sustainable. Thus members of peace clubs must be made to appreciate the need and importance of achieving their goals by putting others first, through strategically calculated service to others, in whatever they do. That is, they should swap selfishness for self-interestedness. A tall order indeed given the high poverty levels prevailing in the country today! Once these two enemies – donor syndrome and selfishness – are put to sleep, the desired goals of ownership and sustainability follow naturally. The issue of sustainability can also be examined in a comparison between an external agency and a local peace club. Because the work of an external agency is usually project-based and dependent on donor funding, its tenor and longevity respond to the politics of the donor and the availability of the funding. NGOs have been known to introduce projects at short notice simply because donor funding has suddenly become available, and to terminate such projects at equally short notice simply because donor funding has suddenly dried up. They have also been seen spending large sums of money on some petty items just because it is in the budget line agreed with the donor although the participants would prefer otherwise. For example, people are sometimes bussed from remote rural areas to cities or resort centres and put up in plush hotels or chalets for days on end in the name of a project and then later sent back empty-handed to their waiting poverty-stricken families and neighbours. This seems to imply that priority is on the project rather than on the wellbeing and long term development of the community in question (this could have contributed to the donor syndrome discussed earlier). And because staff of NGOs sells their labour to the highest bidder, they can change jobs at any time, cutting short their participation in the project and requiring their replacement by a new project officer who might not have been involved in the project hitherto, thereby affecting the smooth continuity of the project. All this points to instability, unpredictability and lack of sustainability of the project where it is directly implemented by an outside agency.

On the other hand, the community can be significantly cushioned from this turbulence if the local formation has a substantive role to play in the project. Because peace clubs are in situ, the project is less susceptible to the instability and unpredictability pointed to above. This is because if, say, the chairperson or other lead person is unable to continue with the project for some reason or other, whoever takes over can do so smoothly because he/she was involved in the project to date. And because the project is part of the everyday life of the members as with the rest of the community, it is not overly affected by the extremes of availability or lack thereof of donor funding. This means therefore that the effectiveness and sustainability of the project are not compromised significantly.

Replicability

The concept of peace clubs can be replicated in other communities, a testimony to its relevance and effectiveness in meeting the peacebuilding and development needs of communities in Zimbabwe. The replication can be in ways akin to vegetative reproduction or to seed dispersion like in plant species whether wild or domestic. For example, people from non-participating communities, having somehow come into contact with peace clubs, have been known to request to have similar formations in their communities. A different way of dispersion is where a member of the peace club in question migrates to another community and works to establish a similar club in the new community. Another possibility is where a member of a club wants a similar structure in a community where a relative or friend lives and asks the relative or friend to set up one in that community and offers him/her assistance to that end. Naturally, however, it is the initiating organisation that plays the lead role in establishing new clubs in new communities.

The bottom line is that the concept has the potential to reach every community in every corner of the country. In doing so, it might very well touch a significant size of the population of the country in one way or another, especially since every person in the country belongs to at least one community. In that respect it can contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation at national level.

Conclusion

The purpose of the paper was to show that community-based peacebuilding formations can be effective peacebuilding tools. To do so, the writer looked at four issues: the reach of the formations and the scope of work that they do, the cost of doing the work vis-a-vis the output, the ownership of the project and sustainability of the intervention, and the replicability of the concept in other communities in the country thereby extending the reach of the project countrywide. In discussing these issues, the writer cited the positives associated with peace clubs, the accompanying provisos if any, and their limitations. Thus on the basis of the discussion, the writer is convinced that on a balance of probabilities, community-based formations can indeed be effective at their work not only in Zimbabwe but in other countries in the region as well.

APPENDIX 8: FOLK TALE; HARE AND OTHER ANIMALS

Once upon a time, animals used to live together as one family and at one point because the rains had not fallen and there was no water to drink. The king of the animals Mr Elephant called for a meeting and all the animals came and he asked his councillors to discussion with other animals what could be done to make sure that there was water to drink. After a winding debate all the animals finally agreed to dig a well except for Mr Hare who said he did not want to waste his time digging a well knowing that there was no water all over the country. Some animals tried to persuade him to take part but he insisted that he was not interested in digging. He told them that he did not need to dig the well because he was not even interested in drinking water from a well. Further, he told them that he saw no reason to take part because he does not drink water from such a source.

The king and all the animals made an agreement that they should dig a well. They took turns to dig the well. The king was the first to dig and so, he dug and dug but there was no sign of water coming. Other big animals like lion took their turns to dig and the dag but there was no sign of water. Also, some animals like Mr. Kudu, Mr. Twizer and other took their turns to dig and there was not even a sign of water again. When the turn for Tortoise to get in arrived, he prepared himself and other animals like Twizer, Lion and baboons laughed at him but he was determined to get in. However, he insisted and the king said let him take his part. Mr. Tortoise entered into the well. Now, Tortoise had his song which he used to sing when faced with challenges. As he was digging, he started singing:

Scratch scratch clean water!

Scratch scratch clean water!

Scratch scratch clean water!

When other animals heard him singing they started laughed at him saying Tortoise was now out of his mind. But Tortoise did not listen to their laughter. He kept on singing his song again and again and as he kept on singing water gushed out and he cried out for help and the other animals assisted him and he got out and the well was full of clean water.

All the animals were happy for him.

The king silenced everybody and said we must thank Mr. Tortoise because all of us had already given up but he used his expertise and we now have clean water. In summation, the king said, now we all know that Mr. Hare refused to take part and we understand that he will certainly come one of the days to fetch this water. Now do you want him to come and drink this water, the king asked all the animals and they shouted with a loud voice, No! We don't want him to fetch this water. All the animals agreed that as they

shall be going to search for food they were to ensure that Mr. Hare was not going to have access to the well. They agreed that every time when they go out someone else should be left behind to guard the well. Mr. Lion volunteered to stay behind to guard the well against the perceived intruder. Early in the morning, the next day all the animals went out to search for food. It was around about 10:00 am when Mr. Hare passed by the well and he asked. Is there anyone here! I am here! Mr. Lion replied. Ok it's you uncle said Mr Hare. I was just passing by so I wanted to find out whether you guys finally got the water! I found another place with plenty of water somewhere. Luck you; it's ok if you have found water. Let me leave but I have something which increases its taste only on someone whose hands and legs are tied. What is that? Can I have a sip first Mr. Lion asked? This is why I did not take part I had this food already Mr. Hare replied. Please can I have a sip first then you can tie my hands and legs as you said Mr. Lion insisted. Mr. Hare gave him a drop of honey and when he tasted it Mr. Lion said quickly tie my hands and legs and let me have a full share. He got tied so tightly after that Mr Hare said, let me go and get some more so you can enjoy. He got into the well, fetched some water and took a bath. Before he left he said to Mr. Lion, I am taking this water so I can make a good mix that you are going to enjoy. Mr. Hare left and never came back that day.

When it was around 17:00 hours all the other animals arrived at the well and they had brought some food for Mr Lion. However, to their surprise they found Mr, lion lying down prostrate with hand and legs tied and they asked what had happened. Mr. Lion narrated the whole story that he was tricked by Mr. Hare. The following day, Mr. Hyena volunteered and he declared that I he was going to crush Hare with his teeth.

In the following morning all the other animals left as usual. At around 10:00 am when Mr. Hare he found Mr. Hyena lying down and feeling hungry. Mr. Hare laughed at him and said I have plenty of food that I was supposed to have brought to Mr. Lion; I thought I was going to find him here today. Mr. Hyena then said give me that food I am hungry. This food is only eaten when one's hands and legs are tied like I did to Lion yesterday and today I brought it only to find out that he is not here. It's very disappointing. So let me leave now said Mr. Hare. Give me the food Mr. Hyena insisted. At the end, Mr. Hyena was outwitted and the other animals found him lying prostrated bound both hands and legs and was never given the honey.

This thing happened for so many days and a number of animals such as Kudu, Baboon volunteered but they were all outwitted by Mr. Hare. At the long last when everybody else had given up, Mr. Tortoise volunteered himself to guard the well. Upon hearing this, some other animals laughed at him saying that

he could not outwit Hare after all what happened to other animals. A day before he started guarding the well, in the evening Tortoise went into forest and to collect some tarry substance and placed it into a gourd for use in the next day. The following morning after all the other animals had left. Mr. Tortoise took the tarry substance and smeared it all over his body and hid himself in the well.

When it was about 10:00 am Mr. Hare arrived at the well and he asked whether anyone was around. As there was no sign for anyone or voice Mr. Hare tried to fetch some water from the well. While he was doing this he saw Tortoise who tried to prevent him from fetching water and when Mr. Hare touched Tortoise his hand got stuck and as he was trying to remove himself using another hand it got stuck too. They exchanged words and pushed each other around and got out of the well and Mr Hare's body got stuck onto Mr. Tortoise.

At around 16:00 hours all the animals heard a noise from a distance and they came running. On arrival they found that Mr Hare had been caught. All the animals celebrated. Subsequently, a meeting was convened to decide the fate of Mr Hare and they all agreed that he was to be ex-communicated from the community because he was a rogue who caused instability in the community.

That is where the story-teller ended.

APPENDIX 9: STEPS TO TRANSFORMING INFORMAL LPCS INTO MAINSTREAM PEACEBUILDING IN ZIMBABWE

Step 1: In collaboration with the parent organization, for example, ECLF, to create a seven member district peace committees comprising of the district administrator, minister of religion, Police officer, Chief, Women's Affairs, Ministry of Youth, and civic organization, which should serve as a steering committee. The seven member steering committee should serve as a conduit between villages and the NPRC

Step 2: In collaboration with the parent organization formalise the district peace committee through registration as a trust for example, Seke community peace trust

Step 3: In collaboration with the parent organization create a district peace committee council comprising 21 ward peace committee chairpersons, one district chairperson from each of the political parties

Step 4: In collaboration with the parent organization provide terms of references for the district peace council

Step 5: In collaboration with the parent organization, Seke community peace trust to engage NPRC and advise them on what might be required at district level to champion reconciliation and healing

Step 6: In collaboration with the parent organization to lobby for recognition and support to participate in promoting national peace and reconciliation through NPRC at community level

-THE END-

APPENDIX 10: DATA ANALYSIS CODES

Code Designation

PC- peace	-peace, mutual understanding, fellowship, social harmony,
TOL- tolerance,	tolerance, accommodation, respect
LT- living together	- living together, co-existence, cooperation, collective, cohesion, co-habiting
PB- peacebuilding	- peacebuilding, resolving conflict, dialogue, reconciliation, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, paying compensation and setting up of peace committees
LH- livelihoods	-livelihoods, income generating projects, types of projects, <i>Mukando</i> , associations
BR- building relationships	-building relationships, forgiving one another,
IL- improved livelihoods	-improved livelihoods, community development, development, entrepreneurship, food secure,
SSP- self-selection process	-self-selection process, involvement of villagers in creating peace committees, procedures for setting peace committees, composition of peace committees, identification and approval of members, community interests

APPENDIX 11: WARD 8 REVOLVING LOAN FUND (MUKANDO) CONSTITUTION

CONSTITUTION

of the Internal Savings and Loans Scheme

Of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee²

Ward 8, Seke district, Mashonaland East Province, Zimbabwe

1. Name of group: Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee ISLS
2. Date formed: 27 December 2014
3. Meeting times:
 1. Start – 09:00
 2. Finish – 11:00
4. Aims
 3. Improving the quality of life of the members of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee
 4. Promoting entrepreneurship among the members
 5. Assisting each other in buying tools, equipment and other household gadgets
 6. Assisting each other in paying school fees for our children.
5. Frequency of meetings
 7. Members of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee ISLS group shall meet once every month
6. Number of members of the ISLS Group
 8. The Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee represents Ward 8 in Seke, so all the members must remain part of this ISLS group. This ISLS group is different from other ISLS groups in this area. So the members of this ISLS group will stick together.
7. Absence without just cause

² **Executive Committee of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee ISLS group: Ex-Officio member:** Councilor Mr. Madhovi, 0772403136; **Chairperson:** Rev. R. Mukucha, 0772889750; **Deputy:** Mrs M. Nekati, 0775628436; **Secretary:** N. Chivasa, 0772246188; **Deputy:** Mrs. Machipisa; **Treasurer:** Mrs Ropi; **Deputy:** Rev G. Muvirimi, 0777348663; **Committee members:** Ms. V. Chipoyera, Rev. D. Razunguzwa, Constable E. Ruwizhu, Constable K.T. Chihota, Mrs. T. Mugwagwa, Mrs. Vera, Mrs. S. Kuwora, Mrs. E. Masona, Retired Warrant Officer Class 2 Mr. E. Lastel/Chinengundu

9. Any member who absents him/herself without just cause will pay a R5 penalty. Only illness or death in the family or such other serious issues shall be considered just cause. Any penalty which is not paid when required will attract 100% interest per month.
8. It is not compulsory for a member of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee to join the ISLS group.
9. Members of the ISLS group shall have an equal opportunity to borrow from the fund. This means that a member of the group should borrow an amount that he/she can repay in the agreed timeframe.
10. Since the purpose of this ISLS is to advance peacebuilding in this area, interest generated is distributed equitably among all the members.
11. If a member borrows from the ISLS and fails to repay the principal and interest at the required time, he/she will be allowed a repayment period of a maximum of two (2) additional months from the time the money was initially due.

For example, if someone borrows US\$100, he/she will be required to repay a total of US\$120 (including 20% interest) by the end of a 30 day period. If by the end of the month he/she pays US\$60, the first US\$20 will go towards the interest due and the remaining US\$40 will go to reduce the principal, leaving a balance of US\$60. Over the next month, the US\$60 balance will attract a US\$12 interest, thereby increasing the amount outstanding to US\$72. Adding to this the US\$5 monthly contribution means that the member in question will be expected to pay a total of US\$77 at the end of that month.

12. Members of the Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee ISLS group will share the money accumulated twice a year, in June and December. The December disbursement event will be accompanied by celebrations and exchanging of gifts by the members.
13. Social fund
 10. This is money set aside to assist members to meet expenses in emergencies. Each member will be required to pay an amount of US\$5 towards this fund at the end of every third month within the year; that is March, June, September and December.
14. Vimbainashe Matiti Peacebuilding Committee members interested in joining the ISLS group will be required to pay a joining fee as determined from time to time.
15. Members who pull out of the ISLS group before the fund is due for distribution will not get refunds of their contributions nor their pro rata interest amounts.

the End

APPENDIX 12: PEACEBUILDING CONSTITUTION TEMPLATE

1. BACKGROUND

a). Parent organization , b). Christian foundation, c). Core Values, d). Limitations of powers, WPC, VPC

2. OBJECTIVES OF PB COMMITTEE

- ✓ *To benefit community thru PB programme*
- ✓ *To encourage..*
- ✓ *To promote*
- ✓ *To assist*
- ✓ *To report periodically*

3. COMPOSITION/MEMBERSHIP of WPC/VPC

a). Ward Peace Committee

b). Structure of WPC

i). Ward peace committee [basa ra WPC chair, Deputy; Secretary; Committee members]

- ✓ Executive members of WPC

ii). Ward peace committee council

- ✓ WPC Council comprise of all 29 chair person

c). Structure of VPC

i). Village Peace committee [basa ra VPC chair, Deputy, Secretary, Committee members]

- ✓ &VPC shall consist of seven members

ii). Village Peace Council

- ✓ Shall consist of all stakeholders in the village

4. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

5. FUNCTIONS OF WPC/VPC

- ✓ To promote peace..
- ✓ To identify and report conflicts to the village head...
- ✓ To recover and return stolen property..
- ✓ As an early warning to report any impeding [zvirikuda kuitika zvisati zvaitika
- ✓ To get involved in the distribution of inputs...
- ✓ To act as entry point for development projects
- ✓ To mobilize livelihoods programmes working with all stakeholders
- ✓ To repair roads; boreholes etc

6. MEETINGS

a). WPC meeting-QUORUM, procedures

b). WPC Council meetings

c). VPC

d). VPC Council meetings

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE COMMITTEES

a). Procedure setting a new VPC, b). Elections of existing VPC

-by election or appointment

-non elected positions [chairperson];

-Rotational positions

b).Criteria for selecting elected members of WPC

8. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMMES

9. MISCELLANEOUS

a). Disciplinary measures b).Resolution of conflict

b). Withdrawal from membership

10. PEACEBUILDING PROPERTIES

- 11. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

12. WORKING WITH EXISTING STRUCTURERS [CHIEF, HEADMAN, SABHUKU, WDCO; VDCO; Police] etc

13. CONFLICTS WITHIN OUR SCOPE

14. PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS

15. ACTIVITIES

16. DEFINITION OF TERMS

a). Conflict; b). Violence; c). Peace; d). Development; e). Project; f). Peacebuilding

17. AMMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX 13: WARD 8 PEACEBUILDING CONSTITUTION

VIMBAINASHE MATITI PEACEBUILDING COMMITTEE: WARD 8

Peacebuilding constitution

Procedurally Adopted on 22 JULY 2015

Contributors: Rev Razunguzwa; Rev Mukucha; Rev Nyakudya; N Chivasa, Mrs Chipoyera, Mrs M. Nekati, Mr. L. Chinengundu, Mrs. Masona; Mrs. T Ropi; Mrs. J Shumba; Mrs. R. Vera; Mrs. Mubaiwa, Clr Madhovi

PEACEBUILDING CONSTITUTION

1.1 Background to the Ward Peace Committee (WPC)

In 2013, the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF) brought the Conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation (CPMRT) to Ward 8 in Seke District of Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe, beginning with three population centres: Ziko-Murisa Business Centre, Vera Business Centre and the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe Church. The ECLF is a grouping of pastors of diverse churches in Zimbabwe which is interested in peacebuilding. Accordingly, the ECLF brought the CPMRT project to the area to promote awareness of the place of conflict in society, its value and that it is a permanent feature of society.

Then on 5 August 2014, the ECLF returned to the area to find out what participants to the previous training event had learnt and what they intended to do with that new knowledge. It is on this day that the participants decided that a peace committee be formed of residents of Ward 8.

Following that decision, the Ward Peace Committee was formed on 7 November 2014 and Village Peace Committees in February 2015. Both the Ward Peace Committee (WPC) and the Village Committees (VPCs) are responsible for running the peacebuilding project, which involves encouraging residents to live together in harmony, building livelihoods, sharing ideas and promoting peace at individual, family and community levels. The formation of the WPC and VPCs was a response to the recognized need for peace in the community just like in other communities all over the world. Therefore through the Committees, members of the community will carry out proper peacebuilding throughout the Ward 8 area.

1.1.1 Link between the WPC and ECLF

The Ward 8 WPC shall operate independently but will maintain links with its parent organization, the ECLF from where it will continue to derive ideas and other services that help move the peacebuilding work forward in this area. The ECLF was formed in 2008.

1.1.2 Foundation of the Ward 8 Ward Peace Committee

Although the WPC is focused on peacebuilding, it is founded on Christianity. For us, the peacebuilding project is based on what is written in the bible, that “blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of god” (Romans 13). However, members of other religions are welcome to work with us; we are also prepared to work with anybody regardless of their religion or ethnicity. This is because for us, working with people that may be different from us in religion, ethnicity, beliefs, ideas or ways of life is the beginning of peacebuilding.

1.1.3 Values of the WPC

These are: love for others, honesty, peace, kindness, desisting from violence, trustworthiness, harmony, unity, good neighbourliness, healing, and reconciliation.

1.1.4 Powers and operations of the WPC and VPCs

VPCs shall operate under the direction of the WPC, the WPC under the District Peace Committee (DPC), and the DPC under the Provincial Committee which in turn shall operate under the National Committee.

2.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

For the peacebuilding project in Ward 8 to operate properly, the following must be in place:

- to ensure that there shall be peace and harmony at individual, family and community levels
- promoting entrepreneurship from the individual to family and community level
- promoting cooperation at family and community levels in everyday life, and helping each other in all emergencies at individual, family and community levels
- promoting self-reliance at individual, family and community levels through agriculture, buying and selling so that everybody in the community has enough food to eat since hunger is a causal factor in conflict and disharmony at individual, family and community levels
- assisting the disadvantaged, such as orphans, widows, those living with different types of disability, the elderly as well as those experiencing shortages of food and money for school fees
- promoting unity among churches and other religious groups so that people can live together in harmony; we hope to achieve this through joint prayer events
- all this shall be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the ZIMASSET (Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation) development blueprint of government.

3.1 COMPOSITION OF THE WPC

The WPC shall be composed of representatives of diverse groups of people found in Ward 8, including the following:

- Christian churches represented by an ordained minister
- Local government represented by a village head or councillor

- Civil servants represented by a police officer, nursing sister or teacher
- Women
- Youth
- Political parties
- Commerce/ business community
- Burial societies.

Since the Ward 8 WPC is founded on Christianity, its chairperson shall be an ordained minister selected from ministers of churches operating in the area. And the position of secretary shall always be occupied by a member of the Ministry of Youth.

4.1 MEMBERSHIP OF THE WARD PEACE COMMITTEE (WPC)

The WPC shall have seven (7) members. These shall be: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and three (3) Committee Members. In addition, up to 20 representatives of the diverse population groups in the Ward shall be appointed to the WPC.

4.1.1 Term of office of the WPC members

Members shall be elected to positions on the WPC for a period of five (5) years at the end of which fresh elections shall be held.

4.1.2 Ward Peace Committee Council (WPCC)

The Ward Peace Committee Council brings together the chairperson, secretary and treasurers of all the villages (29 of them) in Ward 8. Members of the VPCs and WPCC shall be present during the election of WPC members.

4.1.3 Members of the Village Peace Committee (VPC)

These will be chairperson, secretary, treasurer and not more than three (3) committee members. The village head shall automatically be the chairperson of the VPC, without having to be elected to the position.

5.1 MOBILISING RESOURCES FOR THE PEACEBUILDING WORK

5.1.1 Social fund

There shall be a social fund all the time, built from the money contributed by each member of the WPC and all the VPCs. Members of the WPC shall pay US\$2 every month while members of the VPCs shall pay US\$0.50 every month. The money shall be paid into the WPC account. The WPC shall pay 10% of the money collected to the District Peace Committee.

5.1.2 Income generating projects

Since income generating projects are key in promoting peace, the WPC shall carry out different such projects that help enhance the daily lives of residents of the community as well as generate money.

5.1.2.1 Possible projects for the WPC and VPCs

These are:

- Internal savings and credit schemes (*Mukando*)
- Market gardening
- Rearing traditional chickens as well as other types
- Bee keeping
- Rabbit rearing
- Drying and packaging vegetables
- Peanut butter processing
- Buying and selling.

5.1.3 Peacebuilding training

During peacebuilding training events, all VPCs shall be required to assist with requisite logistical issues such as mobilising food and other resources.

5.1.4 Communication

In preparing for the monthly WPC or VPC meetings, the secretary shall be required to inform and remind all members of the respective Committee by cell phone. The money for this purpose shall be obtained from the Committee's coffers in accordance with standing rules and procedures.

6.1 DUTIES OF THE WPC

These shall include the following:

- Promoting harmony
- Receiving and considering reports from the VPCs
- Being the eyes and ears of all peace-related issues in the community and prepared to inform the relevant authorities and institutions of any developments that warrant and require their attention
- Assisting with starting and/or resuscitating income-generating projects at individual, family and community levels
- Encouraging people to work together to build unity and resolve conflicts and divisions.

7.1 MONTHLY MEETINGS

The WPC and VPCs shall be required to meet at least once every month.

7.1.1 Meetings of the Ward Peace Committee Council (WPCC)

The WPCC shall meet twice a year, in June and in December. The meeting shall be led by the WPC.

8.1 SETTING UP VILLAGE PEACE COMMITTEES

Every village in Ward 8 shall have a Village Peace Committee comprising: the chairperson, secretary, treasurer and three (3) committee members.

8.1.1 How VPCs shall be set up

The WPC shall send two (2) delegates to a village earmarked for setting up a VPC to discuss the issue with the village head concerned. The village head will be expected to call a village meeting at which event the WPC delegates will be expected to explain the concept and operation of the project to the villagers. They will be expected to assist in the voting process for the VPC, to publicly announce the names of those elected, and to parade them in front of the villagers for all to see.

8.1.2 Requirements for election to the WPC or VPC

The following qualities shall be required of prospective members of the WPC/ VPCs:

- Must have undergone the CPMRT training carried out by the ECLF in Zimbabwe
- Must be trustworthy, approachable, a team player, and interested in peacebuilding issues
- May be a woman or a man
- Must be fair, open and transparent
- Must have conflict resolution knowledge and skills
- Must be peaceable, selfless, takes advice, has self-restraint, is humble and welcoming
- Must love.

9.1 LIVELIHOODS

Since livelihood is critical in peacebuilding, the WPC shall have sites for collective ward-wide income generating projects. VPCs shall also have similar projects in their individual villages.

10.1 DISCIPLINE

If a member of the WPC or VPC acts against the constitution of the Committee, such as theft, violence, absenteeism from meetings up to three (3) times or more without a plausible reason (such as death of a close relative), and inciting violence, or defaming another member of the Committee, the following disciplinary proceedings shall be followed:

First step

The WPC shall dispatch two (2) of its members, including its Secretary, to investigate the issue to establish the facts on the ground.

Second step

The investigating team shall present its findings to the WPC within a day of concluding their investigation.

Third step

During the WPC deliberations following the investigations, the parties to the conflict should not be present, unless the WPC requires it.

Fourth step

After deliberating over the findings of the investigation, the WPC shall summon the parties to the conflict to present their cases openly with a view to reconciling them.

11.1 RESIGNING FROM THE WPC/ VPC

If a member decides to step down from the WPC/ VPC, he/she shall write a letter stating reasons for doing so. The WPC should deliberate over the letter and respond accordingly within one month of the date of the resignation letter. The member concerned shall not be allowed to participate in the work of the WPC/ VPC.

12.1 PROPERTY OF THE WPC/ VPC

The WPC and VPC shall be expected to acquire both movable and immovable property. Any property acquired should be communicated to the VPC, WPC and the DPC. There shall be proper and full documentation of all acquisitions, including name and monetary value of the item concerned. Copies of the documents must be lodged with the VPC, WPC and DPC.

13.1 FINANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All the money collected shall be deposited into an account with a bank agreed to by the WPC and the VPCs. No more than three (3) signatories shall be allowed, and these shall be the chairperson, secretary and treasurer. Financial books of the VPCs shall be audited by the WPC, while those of the WPC shall be audited by the DPC. During the bi-annual meetings of the WPC, reports on finances and income generating projects at village and ward levels shall be presented and discussed.

14.1 COLLABORATION WITH VILLAGE HEADS, HEADMEN, CHIEFS AND COUNCILLORS

The WPC shall work closely with the local village heads, headmen, chiefs and councillors. It will also do so with the Zimbabwe Republic Police, Ward Development Committee and the Village Development Committees.

15.1 JURISDICTION OF THE WPC/ VPC

The following are some of the types of conflicts that the WPC/ VPCs can handle:

- Domestic disputes
- Intra- or inter-family disputes
- Disputes involving school children
- Contested pregnancies.

16.1 APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In view of the fact that the aim of the project is to promote harmony, the WPC/ VPCs shall use conflict resolution methods that promote reconciliation. One such approach involves giving either party the opportunity to tell his/her side of the story. The role of the WPC/ VPC is to listen and facilitate the exchanges until the parties involved reach an amicable understanding.

17.1 ACTIVITIES

The WPC and VPCs shall occasionally visit traditional and modern courts of law to observe and learn. These courts include the village court, the headman's court, the chief's court and the magistrate's court. This helps members of the WPC/ VPCs to be aware of the different types of disputes that happen in their communities and learn how they can handle them.

On returning from a court visit, members shall present their observations and lessons learnt to the other members of the WPC/ VPCs.

The WPC chairperson shall allocate turns for his/her members to visit the said courts, such that each member visits each type of court at least once. Before visits to the traditional courts, notification shall be made with the relevant authority; it is not necessary to do so with magistrates' court as these are normally open to observers.

18.1 KEY TERMS AS USED BY THE WPC

Conflict – includes such concepts as disagreements, harassment, disputes, arguments, disturbances, fighting, war

Violence – fighting with hands or tools, destroying property

Peace – living together in harmony, getting along well together, having good relationship

Development – having enough to eat for everybody, being free and able to carry out income generating projects

Project – income generating projects carried out by the individual or group

Peacebuilding – building good relationships for harmony, promoting peace and harmony, creating space and opportunities for entrepreneurship and human endeavours.

19.1 AMENDMENT TO THIS CONSTITUTION

This constitution shall not be amended except after five (5) years.

APPENDIX 14: WARD & VILLAGE PEACE COMMITTEE DATA FORM

DATA BASE: CONFIDENTIAL

YEAR-----

Section 1: Biographical data No.....

Name-----Sex ----- Date of Birth----- I.D No.---

-----Village----- Level of education-----

Address:-----

Telephone:----- Next of Kin:-----

Occupation:-----

Section 2: Affiliate Sectors: Position held:

1.----- 1.-----

2.----- 2.-----

3.----- 3.-----

4.----- 4.-----

5.----- 5.-----

Position held in the peace committee:-----

Section 3: Baseline on projects in the village

Name of project	No. of people in the project	What are the aims of the project
1.		
2.		

Which knowledge and skills do you have on any of the projects you listed above (provide explanation below)

What knowledge do you have on how to reconcile individuals or groups that are in conflict do you think other people may need to know from you? (Provide explanation on the spaces below)

Which groups; burial societies or clubs are you a member of in your community?

1.-----2.----- 3.-----

In your own understanding what do you think are main goals of these associations -----

Declaration: I----- declare that I will continue to be a
member of VIMBAINASHE MATITI PEACE COMMITTEE as long as I serve the interests of
PEACEBUILDING.

Signature:----- date-----

For Office use only

Comments:

APPENDIX 15: A SAMPLE OF WPC SKILLS INVENTORY

WPC members	Sex	Skills	Associations affiliated to
00010	Male	-Proficiency in running crech; -Proficiency in running road-runner project; -Proficiency in mediation	-Seke community policing; -Seke cooperative union
00011	Male	-Proficiency in horticulture;	-Minister of religion; -Mukando scheme
00013	Female	-Proficiency in founding Mukando groups; -Proficiency in training Mukando groups; -Proficiency in gardening; -Proficiency in market gardening	-Shamwari yemwanasikana; -Virl micro-finance; -Population service international; Maworesa burial society
00014	Male	-Proficiency in road-runner project, -Proficiency in market gardening -proficiency in mediation	-First mutual -Nyaradzo burial society
00015	Male	-Proficiency in working with groups; Proficiency in running poultry projects	-Minister of religion;
00016	Female	-Proficiency in founding groups of Mukando scheme; -Proficiency in facilitating dialogue	-Mukando scheme; -Maworesa burial society; -Seke rural home-based care
00017	Female	-Proficiency in running agricultural shows; -Proficiency in founding project groups; -Proficiency in	-Zanovaviri club; -Chirasavana village banking; -Mushford burial society; -Community gardening

		monitoring group projects	
00018	Female	-Proficiency in Mukando groups; Proficiency in facilitating dialogue	-Mukando scheme; -Seke Home-based care -Shamwari yemwanasikana -Maworesa burial society